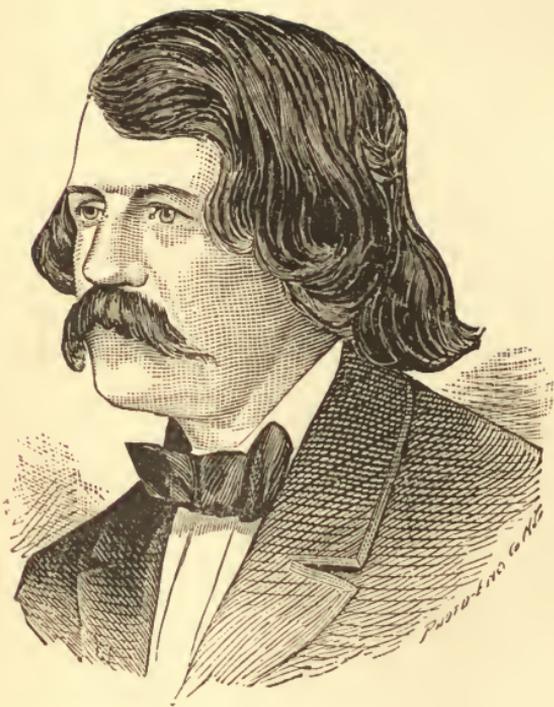




A. H. Hamilton.

Aug. 5th 1886.





Judge
Henry B. Herbert
The Cedars



TOM DRAW IN HIS DOUBLE SEATED WAGON.—Page 76.

“My Shooting Box.”



FRANK FORESTER'S
SPORTING SCENES
AND
CHARACTERS.

EMBRACING

"The Warwick Woodlands," "My Shooting Box," "The
Quorndon Hounds," and "The Deerstalkers."

BY HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT.

(FRANK FORESTER.)

AUTHOR OF "THE ROMAN TRAITOR."

A NEW, REVISED, AND ENLARGED EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOLUME ONE.

With a Life of the Author, a new Introductory Chapter, Frank
Forester's Portrait, Autograph, a full length picture of him
in shooting costume, and seventeen other illustrations,
from original designs by Darley and Frank Forester.



PHILADELPHIA:
T. B. PETERSON & BROTHERS;
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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

It has been suggested, in view of the lapse of time since the first publication of "FRANK FORESTER'S SPORTING SCENES AND CHARACTERS," and the interest it still retains, that a memoir of the author, more complete than has hitherto appeared, and an introductory chapter, descriptive of some important scenes and notable characters therein alluded to, might be found instructive as well as entertaining to the reader. This task the writer has endeavored to perform, within such limits as could be accorded in the work. Many valuable suggestions and memoranda have been kindly supplied by "Toxophilus," of St. Paul, Minn., W. Story Sargent, of Boston, and others, to whom the editor extends sincere thanks. Much information

(3)

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has been derived, also, from a biography of Frank Forester, in manuscript, from the pen of the writer, and from "Memoirs of Eminent Sportsmen," from the same source. The illustrations, added in this edition, from portraits by C. A. Zimmerman, of St. Paul, Minn., speak for themselves, and are remarkably life-like. To the sporting public the editor presents his offering, "with the spirit of a man that has endeavored well;" and the hope that the reader may find its perusal as entertaining as the preparation has been to

WILL WILDWOOD.

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HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT.

("FRANK FORESTER.")

BY WILL WILDWOOD.

THE Herberts of England are of noble lineage, tracing descent from one of the Norman invaders under William the Conqueror. The family-name was originally Fitz-Herbert, signifying Son-of-Herbert; a patronymic adopted, it is said, in consequence of the long period which elapsed between the time of their earlier ancestor of rank—lord chamberlain to Henry I. from 1120 to 1135—and the bestowal of the Earldom of Pembroke upon William Herbert, by Edward IV., in 1468. To this branch of the family belonged the Earl of Pembroke, to whom Shakespeare's "Sonnets" were addressed, or dedicated, in the early editions. It was probably through the marriage of the second earl of this line with the sister of Sir Philip Sidney, that the family derived the taste and proficiency in *belles lettres* which has since characterized the Herberts. The lady referred to was immortalized by rare old Ben Jonson's epitaph:

"Underneath this marble hearse
Lies the subject of all verse —
Sidney's sister—Pembroke's mother:
Death! ere thou hast slain another,
Fair, and learned, and good as she,
Time shall throw his dart at thee!"

In the words of a biographer, the Herbert family
"inherited the characteristics of the proud Percys,

the irascible Jocelyns, the ducal Somersets, and the literary and liberty-loving Sidneys."

Lord Edward Herbert, of Cherbury (1581-1648), was famous not only as a statesman, but as the author of several able works. His brother, the quaint and devout poet, George Herbert, produced many gems of poesy, which are still widely read and appreciated.

The elder son of General William Herbert, son of the eighth Earl of Pembroke, was raised to the peerage in 1780, and created Earl of Carnarvon in 1793. His third son, William Herbert, born in 1778, and subsequently Dean of Manchester, was a scholar of some literary attainments, and died in 1847.

HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT, the subject of the present memoir, eldest son of Dean Herbert, was born in London, April 7, 1807. He received all the advantages of a thorough classical education; being taught by private tutors up to the age of twelve years, after which he was transferred to Eton, in 1820, and lastly to Caius College, Cambridge, in 1825. His college life was characterized by prizes conferred for scholarship, and also, it must be confessed, for convivialities and revelries with fellow-students around the festive board—a mode of life frequently adopted by young collegians, now as then, both in England and America. While at Cambridge he joined a troop of cavalry, made up principally of the sons of noble and wealthy parents, and thus acquired that knowledge of evolutions in the field, combined with thorough mastery of horsemanship, which served him well in later years when preparing his works treating incidentally or wholly upon this theme. The corps, known as the Cambridge Yeomanry Cavalry, occasionally bivouacked between Peterborough, Norwich, Lynn, and Huntingdon, at the invitation of other cavalry troops, freeholders of the country and college students like themselves.

Henry William Herbert's passion for field sports,

inherited from his ancestors, was exhibited while yet at Eton. His father, an enthusiastic sportsman, taught "the young idea how to shoot." Like the young Persian of olden time, the youth was early taught "to shoot, to ride a horse, and speak the truth"—three essential elements in the education of the British gentry; as Sir Walter Scott averred that the young scions of nobility, in his day, would resent an imputation upon their horsemanship as readily as one touching upon their honor.

Henry William Herbert graduated at Cambridge in the class of 1829-30 with honors and the reputation of high scholarship, particularly in the classics. Sir Walter Scott, then in the zenith of his fame, both as a poet and novelist, was his literary idol; and the high spirit of chivalry, of ambition and emulation inherent in the young student, kindled anew under the magic influence of that matchless "Wizard of the North."

Soon after leaving Cambridge young Herbert visited Paris, where, for a time, he enjoyed the scenes, customs, and mode of life peculiar to "the gayest metropolis of the world." After a tour of several months on the continent, he determined, for some unknown reason, to leave home, kindred and station, for another clime; resigning hereditary honors, to which he was entitled by birth and education, and the countless ties which bound him to Britain, whose allegiance he never forsook, to carve for himself a name high on the scroll of fame in the New World.

Arriving in the United States in December, 1831, with "no other purpose than to see America in all its length and breadth," to use his own language, he sojourned for a time in the city of New York, and finally visited Orange county, N. Y., where, for the first time, he beheld "Tom Draw," and in company with that keen sportsman pursued the quail and woodcock in the Warwick Woodlands. The fair region and the genial host have been since rendered

famous in both hemispheres by Herbert's versatile pen. From the quiet vale of Warwick the sportsman and tourist journeyed northward into Canada, and, while there, became acquainted with Captain Peel ("Dinks"), of the Royal Canadian Rifles, whose name was associated with his own in later years through editing a sporting work prepared by the former. While cruising with his brother Frederick Charles, a Captain in the Royal Navy, Herbert became acquainted with several prominent northern sportsmen. After a pleasant sojourn in the Dominion, he returned to New York, and turned his attention to securing some employment congenial to his taste; and, with this end in view, sought the Rev. R. Townsend Huddart, principal of a popular classical academy, where he obtained the situation of Greek and Latin tutor.

Mr. Huddart—now a resident of San Francisco, if still living—thus alluded to Herbert as a classical teacher, writer, etc.:

"I think that Herbert came to me a few months after he reached our shores. His first introduction to me was by the Rev. Dr. Wainwright, Rector of Grace Church, subsequently Bishop. That gentleman stated to me fully and frankly the cause of his coming to New York. This was altogether of a private nature, and was to be considered confidential.

"I soon ascertained his extensive knowledge as a classical scholar, and entrusted to his care the advanced pupils preparing for college. As a man of high acquirements he had few equals, and, in my estimation, no superior. Dr. Anthon may have been a more profound and elaborate critic, but as what may be called an elegant scholar—especially in the Greek tragic writers—Herbert was far above him, while his vivid imagination, poetic genius, and general knowledge of English literature and *belles lettres* was immeasurably superior to Dr. Anthon's * * * He also edited, with Mr. Paterson, another of my teachers, a monthly magazine. His pen-and-ink drawings with crow quills were exquisite, but his favorite delight was to write articles on the field, the turf, and angling. He knew no greater pleasure than to leave town after the

duties of the week were over, on Friday, and return on Monday morning. These spare days and his vacations were the times devoted to the pursuits he loved.

“Mr. Herbert was of a convivial disposition, and, during the periods alluded to, was always a guest at my dinner-table, where he met many noteworthy men of cultivated tastes and refined education; among others, Jas. K. Paulding, author of ‘Salmagundi,’ and various other works. They were much pleased to be in his company. His conversational powers were remarkable, but his temper, after imbibing a certain quantity of wine, became irascible. His *quarrelsome* topics were England and America—lauding the one, disparaging the other. Most of my guests, however, seemed to enjoy his extravagant vaporings, and I think used often to irritate him for the ‘fun of the thing;’ being well aware of his foibles, but delighted with his talents and great knowledge on general topics.

“In his expenses he was decidedly extravagant. I know that he was in receipt of some \$4,000 a year from his writings, salary, etc., and often wondered at his being in pecuniary difficulties.

“As a proof of the estimation in which I held him, it may be mentioned, that, during one winter vacation, I received a letter from him informing me of his being engaged to a lady in Bangor, Maine, and imploring me, as the greatest favor I could confer on him, to come on and be present at his wedding. With the greatest inconvenience to myself I did so, only one day, being obliged to return to my duties. In after years, when he went to live at ‘The Cedars,’ in New Jersey, I heard strange stories of his wayward life, but cannot vouch for the truth of any of them. Men of his calibre and genius are sure to have their detractors and calumniators, and I have no doubt that the accounts of my friend’s doings were exaggerated, or written with a pen dipped in the waters of envy or personal dislike. He had, during the time of my long intimacy with him, made many enemies from the cause I have alluded to; but, take him with all his faults, and over them spread the mantle of ‘Charity’ in its true sense, it will be difficult to meet with one of a more natural, noble disposition, embittered, perhaps, with the feeling of ‘it might have been,’ or one more gifted as a scholar and a writer than Henry William Herbert.

“It may not be uninteresting to mention that my friend was a very powerful aid to me in the education of Charles

Astor Bristed—a grandson of John Jacob Astor—whose eccentricities of character were well known to New Yorkers; while his vast erudition in former years was the theme of general remark among the learned men of Yale College, and subsequently at Cambridge, England, where he entered ‘*ad eundem*’ to take advantage of a more extensive course.

* * * * *

“All I could wish to add to my former remarks is this: that in all my experience as head master of a classical school, which had some reputation in the education of the youth of the day, I never met with any gentleman as an assistant in my laborious duties who so thoroughly came up to my ideas of a conscientious teacher as Henry William Herbert, putting aside all his transcendent talent. He was as faithful, assiduous, and constant in the discharge of his duties as though he were the principal—never flagging, never wearied, and *never*—I say it emphatically—evincing the slightest symptom of incapacity from causes which have their origin in intemperance.”

These remarks may be appropriately supplemented by the following, from the pen of T. Robinson Warren, one of Mr. Herbert’s pupils, and the author, in later years, of a standard sporting work entitled, “Shooting, Boating, and Fishing:”

“This school was the Eton of America, and was conducted on the most liberal scale, after the plan of the great English public schools; having a corps of some twenty professors, many of them men of great distinction abroad, who had been driven from home through too active participation in liberal politics.

“The most notable among this brilliant staff was Mr. Henry William Herbert, Professor of Greek and Latin, then in the full vigor of mental and physical development.

“As a classical scholar he had no peer in this country, as an amateur artist few superiors, as an author his works speak for themselves, and as a sportsman no man in America before or since has surpassed him. Is it strange, then, that we, his pupils, should look upon him as an Admirable Crichton, and worship him as only school-boys can worship their heroes?

“Our school-house, with many acres of play-ground

surrounding it, stood upon an eminence commanding the Bloomingdale road, the great drive and trotting-ground out of New York, and exactly opposite 'Burnham's,' a celebrated road-house of that day, where all the sporting men congregated to witness the feats of the famous trotters duly driven past it.

"This vicinage tended of course to excite the sporting instincts latent in almost all boys, and as we watched our hero's team, a dog-cart tandem, with a spanking grey-wheeler and a black on the lead, dash up the road every day exactly at nine o'clock, and swing through the gates and up the broad avenue, we used to give an involuntary cheer of admiration.

"When in a good humor he would be sure to open up fountains of sporting lore, and to these latter blissful interludes I owe whatever enthusiasm I may have displayed as a sportsman."

In 1832, Mr. Herbert and A. D. Paterson established and jointly edited the *American Monthly Magazine*. The classical character of the periodical was at this time equalled by no other in the country. Herbert's connection with the magazine continued several years—he being for a time sole editor—when the productions of his own pen were its special feature. One of Mr. Herbert's early contributions to the magazine was an obituary tribute to Sir Walter Scott, in 1832. This essay exhibited in glowing lines, his own veneration for the rare genius whose soul-stirring lines, both in prose and verse, had been instrumental in forming not only Herbert's literary taste but also his style. Those who have read his historical novels may have discerned the same vein of chivalric sentiment and similarity of style to the author of "Ivanhoe."

Herbert soon became one of the notables amid the throngs that passed down Broadway; attracting attention not only as one of the popular writers of the metropolis, but as an eccentric genius, usually attired in sporting costume, and bearing a luxuriant moustache—an appendage rather unusual in those days—cavalier boots upon his feet, and massive King

Charles' spurs setting off the whole. Setting aside outward adornment, he was a "man of mark," graceful in bearing, athletic in form, and of attractive features, with eyes through which glowed the true fire of genius. In any assemblage he would have attracted more than passing notice. Among the *litterati* of old Gotham he became known and admired as an able writer, a conversationalist of rare powers, and a gentleman well versed in *belles lettres*. As a reviewer upon the staff of the old *Courier and Enquirer*—a position which he held for several years—he exhibited literary discernment of a high order.

While connected with this journal he became involved in some difficulty which led to a challenge and its acceptance. The preliminaries were arranged and the duelists were to meet in Canada, but Herbert lost his way, or was belated in a snow storm, and arrived upon the ground several hours later than the appointed time. His adversary returned to New York and posted him as a coward—a taunt which so exasperated the latter that, meeting his traducer at Washington Hall, he fired two shots at the man, but happily without effect, as the balls crashed into the door through which the intruder made a hasty exit. This act was made the subject of much comment in the columns of the *Herald*, then a rival of the *Courier and Enquirer*. As Mr. Herbert was acting upon the editorial staff of the latter, the *Herald* was particularly venomous, and in sarcastic allusion to the affair requested its readers to visit the spot and gaze upon "two holes made in a republican door by the royal blood of Plantagenet—*over the left*." The so-called "Code of Honor" was not then held so disreputable as now, yet with the ever recurring allusions to his impulsive act, in the sensational sheet of the elder Bennett, poor Herbert was made unhappy for many months after the unfortunate event.

His growing reputation as a writer brought him into familiar intercourse with many literary celebri-

ties of the day: notably the eccentric genius and rare poet, Edgar A. Poe; T. B. Thorpe, author and artist; Fitz-Greene Halleck, the delightful poet; Horace Greeley, of the *Tribune*, and many other writers, artists, classical scholars and critics then locally famous. Mr. Herbert's first work was received with enthusiasm both in England and America. It was pervaded with that faithfulness of description, as regards the scenes, customs, and manners of the age represented, which rendered his later works so popular.

His miscellaneous writings were read with general avidity, and the fruits of his pen were eagerly sought. As a magazine writer he soon became one of the most voluminous in America; it being worthy of note that during his literary career there was scarcely a literary periodical of real and lasting merit to which he did not contribute. The *Knickerbocker Magazine*, founded by his friend and collaborator, Charles Fenno Hoffman, but conducted in after years by the genial Lewis Gaylord Clark, received many of Herbert's novelettes, historical essays, etc., after his retirement from the editorship of the *American Monthly Magazine*.

In 1836 and 1837 he edited a delightful annual entitled "The Magnolia," in which his own productions formed a leading feature. His contributions to the leading magazines were almost without number.

His capacity for literary labor was remarkable, and his writings were beyond doubt more varied, versatile and extensive than any other American author of that period. The range of subjects to which his pen turned with nearly equal facility included historical romance, criticism, historical essays, poetry, editorials, etc., in all forms; and he had not as yet hit upon that theme which was destined to make the author more famous than all others combined.

Being an ardent and accomplished sportsman, it is not remarkable that he soon formed the acquaintance of William T. Porter, then editor of the first

sporting journal published in America. Through intimacy with the tall editor of the *Spirit of the Times*, Mr. Herbert was a frequent visitor to the sanctum wherein naturally congregated the lovers of dog and gun, the rod, the horse, and the drama. Within that office he first met and became familiar with many of the first sportsmen of the land. In 1839, soon after William T. Porter had purchased and assumed editorial control of the *American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine*, Herbert was requested by George Porter—who edited the magazine temporarily during his brother's absence in the South—to write a series of articles on the sports of the field, with the primary object not only of entertaining the readers, but of rendering the pastime of shooting more popular in public esteem. To this request he readily acceded, and acting upon the suggestion of his friend in selecting a *nom de plume* which should be typical, to some extent, of "the gentle art of woodcraft," he assumed that name by which he is best known and most famous in both hemispheres: the title of "FRANK FORESTER."

The delightful sporting tale which appeared under the head of "A Week in the Woodlands," was received with rare favor throughout the land, and is the germ of his volume, entitled "THE WARWICK WOODLANDS"—a sporting brochure, only equalled by others from the same author. Thus from pure love of the subject, and as a relaxation from more weighty labors upon which he supposed his fame as an author to depend, was Mr. Herbert induced to prepare those works upon shooting, fishing, and the horse, which have made the name of "Frank Forester" a household word wherever manly out-door recreation is appreciated. Strange as it may appear, FRANK FORESTER, the sporting author, is held dear where Henry William Herbert, the novelist, is forgotten—many recognizing him in the former guise, while ignorant of his true patronymic. His histor-

ical romances have been for the most part swept aside by the torrent of later—and many of them less brilliant—works of fiction. Like some other eminent writers, his fame rests chiefly upon the productions held as “unconsidered trifles” by the author. It is seldom that gentlemen of surpassing talent, combined with large practical experience in the sports of field and flood, have adorned the sporting literature of the new world with the scintillations of their genius. In England, where the chase and out-door recreation have been practised by the gentry for centuries, it is far different. Frank Forester’s writings form an important feature of American literature, derived not only from an hereditary zeal and taste for field sports, but an ability in literary walks, and opportunities for the practice of the sports he loved, both here and in Europe, which combined to make him a model sporting author.

During 1839, in one of his sporting tours through Maine, Mr. Herbert chanced to meet and form the acquaintance of a beautiful and accomplished young lady, Miss Sarah Barker, a daughter of the mayor of Bangor; and a mutual attachment being formed, they were married shortly after. It is said that the lovely Maria D’Arcey, the heroine of “MY SHOOTING BOX,” faithfully represented in manner and person the author’s bride. The wedded life of Mr. Herbert was a period of real happiness, gleaming out like sunshine in a career darkened before and after by loneliness, misfortune, and melancholy, which in the end amounted to despair. He was not naturally morose or sad. On the contrary he was by nature cheerful, bright, and enthusiastic; but his severance from home and kindred, with many unhappy episodes, marred in some respects the life of one whose faults, as Rev. Mr. Shackelford truly remarked, were all on the surface, while his virtues were more numerous than were generally known. With his

lovely wife a few years only of happiness were vouchsafed the sporting author, but during that period he was most industrious in his vocation, and her death, which occurred in 1846, was a great blow to him. For several years after he studiously avoided society, and at certain anniversaries it has been remarked by an intimate friend that he was wont to confine himself to his room, and bring forth those mementos of his heart's idol which were sure to awaken keen and bitter anguish, when he would weep as bitterly as a child at remembrance of his sad bereavement. These mementos which he so cherished, consisted of a single glossy ringlet, a dainty bridal slipper, and a portrait of his wife painted by Henry Inman. The following poem, written by him soon after Mrs. Herbert's death, and published in the *Literary World* at that time, is expressive of the sorrow by which his proud spirit was bowed down:

MY HOME.

“A home! a home! yes, yes! though still and small,
 I have a home where soft the shadows fall,
 From the dim pine tree, and the river's sigh,
 Like voices of the dead wails ever nigh;
 Nor hearth is there, nor hall, nor festive place,
 Nor welcome smile of that bewitching face,
 Nor the low laughter, nor the sweet, fond tone,
 That made pain pleasant—yet it is mine own—
 My heart's own home, where'er my foot may tread,
 Oh! for my narrow house and lowly bed!

“Let others turn, when each has ceased to roam,
 To the calm pleasures of his childish home—
 Let others turn when the day's hot toil is o'er
 To that pure kiss which greets them at the door;
 To that bright eye which kindles at the sound
 Of their known footsteps, shedding glory round;
 I have no childish home, nor earthly hold—
 The kiss that breathed upon my lips is cold;
 The eye that beamed for me is dimmed and dead—
 Oh! for my narrow house and lowly bed!

“Earth has no home that can with mine compare,
 For thou, my own lost one, for thou art there.
 It matters not that they are sealed in death,
 Those founts of light, and still the balmy breath,
 And wan the radiant lip and lustrous brow—
 It matters not—for it is always thou!
 It matters not how cold, if I at last,
 On that true heart of thine when all is past,
 May pillow once again my lonely head—
 Oh! for my narrow house and lowly bed!

“Oh! weary, waste and weary is the day,
 And weary is the night, Oh! will away!
 For anguish wakens with the rising morn,
 And sleepless sorrow of the night is born!
 And years must pass, long years, ere I shall run
 To that dear spot, which fools are fain to shun,
 The only home which now my soul doth crave,
 Thy home—the long, the last—thine early grave;
 Oh, that for me the bridal sheets were spread
 Now, in my narrow house and lowly bed!”

In 1841 Mr. Herbert was engaged as a regular contributor to *Graham's Magazine*, at that time a leading literary periodical of America, fairly rivaling the *Knickerbocker*. During the next fifteen years many of his finest productions appeared in this magazine, edited by his friend, George R. Graham. In 1849 he edited *The Era*, a weekly journal, in conjunction with his friend and former pupil, Colonel Thomas Picton, of New York, a son of General Sir Thomas Picton, who fell at Waterloo.

The year 1846 was noted by the publication of one of his master-pieces: “THE ROMAN TRAITOR; OR, THE DAYS OF CICERO, CATO, AND CATALINE,” which is now published by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia. It is a historical romance founded on the conspiracy of Cataline, and is a living picture of the customs, the people, and the times preceding the fall of the old Roman Republic, and from the time of its publication has taken rank as a classic upon the theme and of the age of which

it treats, for it is of that character which retains freshness, vigor, and interest for all time. The *London Weekly Dispatch*, in reviewing "The Roman Traitor," remarked :

"This is a powerfully written novel—or rather a tale of Rome in the glorious days of its Republican government. The plot is founded upon the memorable conspiracy which will hand the name of Cataline down to the latest posterity. The author has made himself well acquainted with the Roman manners and institutions of the age ; and without studying to display his antiquarian lore, he has described characters, dress, habits, and peculiarities with an accuracy which stamps his work with value. It is indeed 'a Roman Novel of the classic ages ;' and although on entering upon a work so difficult of execution, the writer must have encountered many difficulties, he has surmounted them all, achieving for himself in this department of literature a proud success.

"In the historical portion of the work, which describes vividly the progress of that remarkable plot, whereby the arch traitor nearly overthrew the great Roman Republic ; and the patriotic orations of Cicero and Cato, the eloquence of Cæsar, exemplified by faithful records of their speeches, the reader will find food for reflection, and retain a mental picture of those stirring days of ancient Rome, 'that sat on her seven hills, and from her throne of beauty ruled the world.'"

About 1845 Mr. Herbert supervised the erection of his beautiful cottage, "The Cedars," after the model imaginatively described in his sporting works as the Shooting Box of Harry Archer.

This dwelling, upon the bank of the Passaic River, midway between Newark and Belleville, was Mr. Herbert's home for many years, and he there wrote several of his finest works. The site was such as would have been chosen by very few, being bounded on two sides by the Mount Pleasant Cemetery, and consisting in part of a small, marshy tract, inundated at certain seasons by the river. With a keen perception for the beautiful, and recognizing in the isolated

nook a spot capable of rare adornment, Herbert at once proceeded to check the overflow by a terrace along the river's bank, to build up the low land, and place therein rustic mounds, avenues, etc., redeeming the bleak, barren locality, and transforming it into a veritable bower of verdure. With his knowledge of landscape gardening and of botany, the place was made to bloom with myriads of flowers; and fragrant cedars, from which the abode derived its name, crowned the little eminence on which the building was erected. The dwelling, a picturesque cottage of the Mary Tudor style of architecture, revealed alike the classic taste and the eccentricity of its owner. Half hidden in the spreading cedars, it presented a picture of culture and refinement not to be obtained through mere expenditure of money. A huge pair of stag antlers adorned the front, and upon one of the doors might be seen "curiously carved heraldic insignia," embracing, conspicuous above the rest, the Herbert coat of arms; carved, as an intimate friend of the sporting author has remarked, by "Frank Forester"—familiar from early youth with the science of heraldry. Within its walls could be discerned evidence of the literary taste and sporting proclivities of the owner. A well-stocked library, an armory of sporting appliances, guns, fishing rods, with various trophies of the chase, relics of ancient warfare, etc.; a room furnished with the materials upon which to entertain convivial friends; and a general air of comfort, and even luxury, of the style peculiar to English gentlemen, at once attracted the attention of a casual visitor.

Though living in comparative seclusion at this little hermitage, he loved to maintain that spirit of hospitality natural to him by birth and breeding, whereby he obtained the title, among his neighbors, of "the Lord of 'The Cedars.'" Col. Thomas Picton, his intimate friend and frequent guest, has remarked that no feudal baron ever took more pride in his an-

cestral castle, or enjoyed more heartily the entertaining of honored guests, than did Herbert in "The Cedars"—so inseparably connected with his literary fame. In close proximity to the house stood the kennels and stable of the sportsman—and neither of them were at any time devoid of occupants. Pine Brook, the Big Piece, the Parsippany Meadows, and other grounds famous for quail, woodcock, snipe, etc., so frequently alluded to in his sporting works, were all within easy reach of his cottage. Located thus, in the centre of a fine game region, and possessing dogs of the best type, weapons of approved make, and a thorough knowledge of sportsmanship, Mr. Herbert was the wonder and admiration of the surrounding country as a sportsman. In the field, with dog and gun, or along the trout streams, with rod in hand, he was held a model the same as in his works pertaining to those pastimes.

Soon after his removal to Newark, Mr. Herbert's only son, William, was sent to England, where, under the supervision of his relatives, he might receive a good education. It was stipulated that upon the completion of his studies, he should return for a time to the land of his birth before taking up a final residence in Britain; but through the influence of his kindred in England, the affections of the son were alienated from America and her institutions. Upon finishing his studies, William Herbert was placed in the British army, in which he is now an officer of rank.

By his first wife Herbert had also a daughter, who did not long survive. With the exception of a visit at rare intervals from his sister or his brother—an officer in the royal navy—the novelist and sportsman had no kin in America.

As his sporting tales became more widely known, and his influence thereby steadily increased, "Frank Forester" devoted more time to this branch of literature, with him, from the first, a veritable labor of

love. In the words of Duyckinck, "a poetical spirit of enthusiasm seems to run all through his writings;" and this is especially true of his productions touching upon the gun and rod, or relating to the horse. From time to time various works upon American field-sports, etc., emanated from his pen, and came to be recognized as the classics on this topic.

THE WARWICK WOODLANDS; or, Things as they were there Twenty Years Ago, by Frank Forester, was published in 1845, and was the first of Frank Forester's sporting tales. It was originally published in W. T. Porter's *American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine*, where it met with much favor, and the popularity of the serial led to its publication in book form.

MY SHOOTING-BOX, by Frank Forester, with original illustrations by Darley, was published in 1846. Regarding this admirable brochure, the opening chapters of which appeared in *Graham's Magazine*, William T. Porter remarked:

"This long-promised book from the pen of our old contributor and friend, Henry William Herbert, Esq., is at last issued, and has by this time been devoured by hundreds of eager readers. 'Frank Forester' is probably the best writer on sporting who wields the pen, and his books on that subject have always been received with marked favor. What better companion for a rainy evening than the 'Warwick Woodlands,' *par exemple*? Why, one feels at once that the fetch of jolly Tom Draw, and the wraith of rollicking, comfortable Harry Archer are at one's very elbow; and can see dimly in the retired corner of the room the honest countenance of Tim Matlock. They are all familiar household friends of one sort, and the right sort. Knowing full well that the public could not soon tire of these inimitable characters, our author has again introduced them to our notice, and with the addition of some new ones, and the running in of a slight thread of romance, just to connect the several portions of narrative, he has made a book that combines instruction in shooting, with amusement for even the most delicate of the fair sex. It is illustrated by four engravings, of which the author contributed the designs for two, and Darley those for the others. The drawing of 'American Woodcock' by the

former, and of Tom Draw by the latter, are exquisite. The references made through the work to certain parties we wot of in and about these excavations, will be understood and appreciated by numerous admiring friends."

THE DEERSTALKERS, a sporting tale of the South-western counties, by Frank Forester, illustrated from designs by the author, and by Darley, was published in 1847, and, like the two former, this work proved decidedly popular—the first chapters having previously appeared in *Graham's Magazine* under the head of "Field Sports and Pastimes." The descriptive portions treating of natural scenery, deer-stalking, etc., must be read to be appreciated.

THE QUORNDON HOUNDS; OR, A VIRGINIAN AT MELTON MOWBRAY, by Frank Forester, with original illustrations by the author, was published in 1852, and describes in a spirited manner the haps and mishaps of English Fox-Hunting, the sport of the nobility, and that sport carried to its *acme* as it is nowhere but with the Quorndon Hounds and at Melton Mowbray. Men, horses, dogs, and scenery are described as they were at Melton when the author was last there.

FRANK FORESTER'S SPORTING SCENES AND CHARACTERS (the present work), contains a full history of the author's life, and a new introductory chapter, never before published, Frank Forester's portrait and autograph, a full-length life-like picture of him in his shooting costume, and seventeen other illustrative engravings, from designs by Darley and Frank Forester, as well as his celebrated sporting works, entitled, "THE WARWICK WOODLANDS," "MY SHOOTING-BOX," "THE DEERSTALKERS," and "THE QUORNDON HOUNDS," four excellent sporting tales, which have never been excelled in the English language.

Whether viewed as an author, a critic, a classical scholar, or a sportsman, Henry William Herbert must be regarded as a remarkable man. Major

George B. Halsted, who knew him intimately, referring to the varied acquirements of the sporting author, very pertinently and truly remarked :

“ He who visited Herbert socially, having literary tastes, found him a most congenial and instructive companion. He who walked with him, as has often the speaker, over the green fields or up the mountain steep—on the seashore, or by the quiet stream, would be dull, indeed, not to find pleasure, and derive new and valuable information from his well-stored mind. Of Herbert it may, with much truth, be said, ‘ he was learned from the hyssop on the wall to the cedar of Lebanon.’ The stone which he picked up in his wayside ramble, under his eye, became a text from which he would read you an entertaining and instructive lecture on geology or mineralogy.

“ Did you observe in the wild wood a giant of the forest, of a hundred years or more ; ‘ an oak, a brave old oak, with its hundred arms so strong,’ with wide-spreading branches and picturesque surroundings, and craved a picture of it, you had but to express your wish to Herbert, and, with tablet on knee and pencil in hand, you could see his practised skill transfer its shapes and beauties with the hand of a master, and he was well repaid for the time and skill expended in enjoying the pleasure his handiwork gave to the thankful recipient.

“ He sketched with his pencil the wild-wood glen and clear, running stream, with like faithfulness, beauty, and skill—that with his pen he described the lives, habits and beauties of their wild denizens of fur, fin and feather. Like all true sportsmen, while fond of following the game in season with gun, dog and rod, he was a bitter and unrelenting enemy to all poachers and pot-hunters.

“ That he became an accepted authority on Horse, Dog, Gun and Rod, is not so much to be wondered at, when we remember that students and graduates of England’s famous schools and universities—of which he was one with high honors—with equal good judgment, do not by any means forget or neglect physical training. Of both these facts Herbert was a good example, for he was an enthusiastic lover as well of books as of all health-promoting, health-preserving sports ; and as a member of that world-wide renowned ‘ Melton Hunt ’ of merry England, he was known far and wide as one of the boldest and best cross-country riders of a hunting club, which contained, in his young university days, among its members, the most famous horsemen of England. Our ear-

liest recollection of Herbert is seeing him riding down our own Broad street on his beautiful bay thoroughbred. He could, indeed, 'witch the world with noble horsemanship.'

"His neat little skiff, the 'Soria,' is yet remembered on the Passaic, in which he was accustomed to row down to Newark and back to his home, and in which he was ready to row a race with any one using boats on the river. His match from Belleville to Newark with Captain Frank Harrison is yet remembered, in which the youth of the Captain prevailed."

The last few months of Herbert's life and his untimely death, if fully and faithfully recorded, would form a chapter as pathetic, stirring and tragic as ever appeared in romance. In the winter of 1858 he met a young lady of beauty, a reputed heiress, under circumstances which awakened mutual friendship, soon ripening into love, and in March of that year Adela R. Budlong, of Providence, Rhode Island, became Mrs. Herbert. All went happily for a time, but it appears the lady possessed an over-credulous and fickle nature, as the gossips soon began to sow the seeds of distrust and anxiety in the mind of the bride.

Returning home from a brief visit to New York, soon after his marriage, Herbert found his wife estranged. Demanding the cause, he could gain no clue; the domestic trouble was finally adjusted amicably to all appearance; when the unfortunate man again went to New York city, determined to find there a temporary home more congenial to his wife, aloof from the malicious tongues of the gossips. He parted with his bride at the rustic gate entering the cemetery, with a farewell embrace and in better spirits. He had, however, been absent but a brief period when he learned that she had deserted him. Hoping still, almost against hope, that a reconciliation might be effected, poor Herbert used every means to induce her to return. Finally, learning that his wife had applied for a divorce in the Indi-

ana courts, and that she utterly refused all intercourse with him, Mr. Herbert became despondent—meditating on his misfortunes and the final crushing blow which filled the cup of bitterness to overflowing—until his naturally powerful mind was shattered, and he frequently expressed intentions of committing suicide. About two o'clock on the morning of May 17th, 1858, just three months from the date of his last marriage, Henry William Herbert shot himself to the heart in his rooms at the Stevens House, New York city, while in company with his friend, Philip H. Anthon. Stepping forward into the room, which he had left for a moment, with the remark, "I told you I would do it," upon his lips, he fell lifeless upon the floor. He left a few letters to familiar friends, one to the coroner, and another to the public press, explaining his motives for the deed.

"To the Press of the United States of America :

"Before going to my account, I would say a few words to the Press of America, and to its conductors, as to men among whom I have, for many years, been more or less associated.

"I have my faults, my failings ; I have done my share of evil, in my life, as all men have done ; perhaps I have done my share of good, likewise.

"Of my private history few men know anything—fewer, still, know much—no one knows the whole, it cannot concern the public to know anything. As a writer let me be judged—as a man let my God judge me.

"I implore, not praise, not a favorable construction—I implore SILENCE. For what I have to account with God, let me account with God, and not with man, who may uncertainly perceive and distinguish facts, but certainly cannot perceive causes, and divine motives and intentions.

"I do not even ask charity ; I only implore silence. Let the good that I have done, if any, be interred with my bones ; let the evil also. For the evil, I can say positively, is such as can do no evil after me. I have taught, I have inculcated, I have put forth nothing which I did not believe to be good and true. In all my life I have written no line of which I am ashamed—no word which I desire to blot.

“I have done many things wrongly, many things of which I am ashamed, many things which I have sincerely repented, many things under the pressure of poverty and necessity, to which I am not accustomed by my education, which, I hope, I should not do again under any temptation.

“I am very sorry. I have been weak at times, and have fallen—who has not done so ?

“For justice’ sake, for charity’s sake, for God’s sake, let me rest. I bear an honorable name ; I have striven hard, in great trial, in great temptation, in a foreign country, in a false position, among men who did not, perhaps could not, sympathize with me, to keep it honorable. As you would have your own name honored, and your sons preserve them to you, I charge you, do not dishonor mine.

“Few will miss me when I am gone, probably none lament me—so be it ! Only I implore you, do not misrepresent and malign me.

“Having said this, I have said nearly all—one word more only—if, as I presume will be the case, my earnest and hopeful appeal for repose be disregarded—if the vultures of the Press pounce on my cold remains, to tear through them the heartstrings of my living relatives—to blazon forth all my misdeeds in unblushing colors to the sun—let none of my friends—if I have a friend—stand forth to defend me. Defence only provokes bitterer attacks and gives a keener tooth to scandal.

“I die forgiving every man who has wronged me, asking forgiveness of every man whom I have wronged. I have atoned, so far as I know, or can atone, for every wrong I have ever done.

“I leave the means, I believe, if they be carefully managed, to pay everything that I owe, and perhaps to leave a small surplus. I never shrank, while I was alive, from meeting the consequences of my deeds face to face. I never said a word to a man’s back which I would not or did not say to his face.

“Remember now, all you that would assail me, *that my back is turned* forever—that henceforth, forever, I can disprove no slander that is spoken of me ; that with me no witness can be evermore confronted ; that from no accusation, how false soever, can I prove myself not guilty. Of all cowardice, the most base and cruel is to strike the dead, who can make no defence or answer.

“I ask no praise—do not praise me—probably I deserve none.

“I deserve reproach, doubtless, for I am mortal, and

have sinned. Say so, then, of me, if you say anything, and let my sins go with my mortality to His judgment who can tell not only when and where, but *why* they were committed, and how far they have palliation—how far they deserve pardon.

“Remember, also, when you judge, that of all lives mine has been almost the most unhappy.

“No counsellor, no friends, no country have been mine for six and twenty years; every hope has broken down under my foot as soon as it touched it; every spark of happiness has been quenched as soon as it has been kindled.

“If I have sinned much and sorrowed much, I have also *loved* much—more perhaps than I have either sinned or sorrowed. It is the last drop that overflows the golden bowl, the last tension that breaks the silver cord. My last hope is gone—my last love and my life go together—and so good-night to

“HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT.”

Another letter, to his friend and fellow-countryman, Miles I'Anson, will be read with interest. It is evident that the despairing author had intended to put an end to his life upon the spot where he had last parted with his wife, but the monomania terminated, as before stated, in the commission of suicide at New York. The letter, also quoted, to another friend, breathes a spirit of love, compassion, forgiveness, and despair which is most pathetic.

“MY DEAR MILES I'ANSON :—The time has come, and I call upon you with the last words of a dying countryman to come and perform your promise. My last friend, do not fail me.

“When you receive this I shall be lying dead in the cemetery. I could not be easy in New York, and I must not be buried in the Potter's field, or by charity.

“Have me dressed in the clothes which I have put in the carpet-bag, with the little packet I have sewn to the shirt upon my heart, and the pin-cushion with ‘HERBERT’ pricked upon it under my head—a plain oaken coffin, with this inscription only :

HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT—aged 51.

“ Let me be buried in your lot, send the coffin down by the steamer ; no funeral and no pomp. I send a note to Mr. Shackelford, he will perform the service.

“ I enclose a draft for £10 sterling on my sister, which will pay all expenses ; I have written to her. Come the moment you receive this, or you will be too late and they will thrust me into some hole away from humanity. She has refused all reconciliation absolutely and forever, but she is not to blame, and it is my last request that no friend of mine will blame her or defend me, except to say what I solemnly swear with my dying breath, that I did not marry her for money—that I did not know when I married her, and do not know *now*, whether she has any money or how much—that I never had a word or dispute with her about money, and never said one unkind word until that Monday, when I threatened my life if she would not tell me who had accused me to her falsely.

“ God forgive and God bless her. I forgive all men who have wronged me, and ask forgiveness of all whom I have wronged. Every shilling I owe in America will be paid from the lease of the house and the books which I leave behind me, ready to be published.

“ Give my best parting love to all my friends, think of me sometimes as a most miserable man, yet your true friend,

“ HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT,
“ Stevens House.

“ I wish to have a very small, very plain headstone of Little Falls or Belleville stone, with this inscription,

HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT,

of

England.

Aged 51 years.

Infelicissimus.

“ Will you take care of Vixen ? She has been my only comfort. She has never left me for one moment. I am sure she knows I am wretched.

“ God bless you and your wife.”

The following is the last letter he ever wrote :

“ MY DEAR MILES :—You will find me in the cemetery, just outside of the garden-gate, where I stopped for the last time to look at her beloved face—

“ As you go for the coroner, telegraph to Philip H.

Anthon, No. 15 West Twenty-fourth street, these three words—*'Herbert is dead.'*

"He will know what to do.

"Your old friend,

"HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT."

"MY DEAR ANTHON:—What is done is done, and cannot be undone. I know you will blame and probably despise me; but the strength of one man is the weakness of another, and I could not endure the agony I have been suffering.

"If ever I have vexed, wronged or offended you, I sincerely and humbly beg your pardon.

"As the last request of a dying man I entreat you *on account of this*, not to throw up my affairs, but to endeavor to settle them fully. I am satisfied that with the rent of 'The Cedars,' and my own goods, etc., there will be enough to pay everything that I owe on earth.

"I have the manuscript of three books all ready for the press, which ought to produce at least \$1,000, and I think that in view of this act of mine, good or bad, they would sell even now.

* * * * *

"I assure you that I have received a letter from my beloved wife which exonerates her of all blame, except for over-credulousness, sensitiveness, and a weak fear of me who would have died a hundred times rather than harm her. I entreat you, as my last request, not only not to speak, but not to think unkindly of her.

"Never seek to defend my memory at any suit to her discredit—only you can assert, for I consulted you before we were married, and you know it, that I never cared, much less knew, or inquired anything about her property or troubled her about it.

"Remember always that I love her beyond anything on earth. I would even ask you, if it ever be in your power, to protect and assist her as my beloved widow.

"Fare you well, old friend; think sometimes of old days, and of your friend,

"HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT."

The sad tidings of Mr. Herbert's death flew with electric rapidity throughout the country, and the expressions of regret were sincere and wide-spread. His enemies, however, seized upon the opportunity

to traduce him through the public press, regardless of his last touching appeal, while his friends, viewing the plea for silence in a strict and forbidding sense, seemed disarmed even of the privilege to uphold his honor, and shield his fair fame from the aspersions of heartless scribblers. It may be readily observed—and it is a solace to the admirers of “Frank Forester” throughout the land—that his traducers are for the most part men who knew him only as a casual acquaintance; whose opinions, interests, or principles clashed with his own, while he was in truth,

“Most loved by those who knew him best.”

His warmest friends included men of unblemished honor—clergymen, judges, authors, etc.—and as a man is known by the company he keeps, so may Herbert be known. One of his staunch and intimate friends, the late gifted and illustrious “Acorn” (James Oakes), of Boston—a man renowned as a writer and a philanthropist—who knew Henry William Herbert for a quarter of a century, penned the following tribute to his memory, which checked many of the malicious slings and effusions aimed at the lamented sporting author:

HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT.

“The evil that men do lives after them;
The good is oft interred with their bones.”

“The friends of Henry William Herbert, in this city, were appalled at the announcement of his death a few days since. The sad intelligence fell upon the heart of the writer, who had known him for over a quarter of a century, like a withering mildew, and, were it not for the dying injunction of poor Herbert, that his friends should remain silent, my feeble pen, directed by the best energies of my brain, should reveal the deep sympathy of my heart for one whose life, although somewhat wayward, was nevertheless marked by many virtues and bright deeds.

“Henry William Herbert, the brilliant genius and rare scholar, is in his grave!

“After life’s fitful fever he sleeps well. For charity’s sake let not the sanctity of that grave be desecrated by heartless or unfeeling scribblers, simply to feed or gratify the appetites or morbid tastes of those whose wicked and malignant slanders were mainly instrumental in wrecking so bright a mind!

“After frenzying that once noble intellect, and sending its owner unbidden into the presence of his Maker, may we not hope for humanity’s sake that the portals of the grave may be a barrier against the poisonous tongue of the earth’s greatest pestilence—the SLANDERER!

“For the sake of those whose veins bear kindred blood, and whose hearts and spirits are now bowed down to the dust, forbear, I implore you, and no longer aim your poisoned and malignant arrows of revenge at the dead, through the already lacerated spirits of the living! But let the faults and weaknesses of him, whose earthly career met so melancholy and fearful an end, slumber in silence with his ashes in the tomb.

“For mercy’s sake let his kind acts and charitable deeds, only, rest in the minds of his fellow-men, for many such acts and deeds are known to the writer, which will assuredly be placed to his credit at the final judgment day. Were it not for violating the last request of this extraordinary man, I would reveal many bright and manly characteristics; but the observance of a request, made almost with his expiring breath, forbids, and tells me to drop a curtain over his grave, on which to write, in letters of gold, *Silence!* Peace to the ashes of HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT.
“ACORN.”

The remains of the gifted author, much to the chagrin of his friends, were committed to the grave without the funeral service, which is forbidden, in the case of suicide, by the ritual of the English Episcopal Church. This was one of the saddest features of an event rendered doubly pathetic through the absence of all kindred of the deceased. A few Masonic brethren present cast sprigs of evergreen upon the coffin, the last work was performed, and the cortege moved slowly away; the clergyman in charge having only too strictly followed the appeal for “silence.”

For some time after the tragic death of Mr. Herbert, "The Cedars," his late home, remained unoccupied; and the dwelling, viewed with superstitious eyes, soon became known as "the haunted house of Newark." A writer, alluding to the wild, weird associations of the place, and the prevailing idea of those living in close proximity to it, remarked that little children passed the spot with feelings of awe, and many averred that in the still twilight, or deep, sombre darkness, strange, mysterious noises issued from the desolate dwelling, lights flitted to and fro through the tenantless rooms, and the wide-spreading cedars moaned and sighed in mournful cadence!

Upon the sale of the dwelling, which occurred later, the proceeds were transmitted to England, without reserve. "The Cedars" fell to the ownership of a wealthy and cultured gentleman; but the place, around which clusters so many associations, sad, cheerful, personal and literary, of the bright genius "Frank Forester," in the minds of American sportsmen, was consumed by fire many years ago, and at the present day scarce a vestige remains of Herbert's classic cottage-home. A few cedars, which, as Major Halsted has aptly remarked, "it would be vandalism now to disturb," and a few crumbling ruins mark the site, while the grave of the author and sportsman is but a little way distant. At the dedication of that cemetery, which now embraces the grounds formerly occupied in the little domain of "The Cedars," it was his pen which prepared the impressive ode, and many of the venerable residents of Newark will remember, doubtless, the admiration it elicited.

Nearly eighteen years had elapsed since the death of "Frank Forester," whose fame as a sporting author seems to have increased rather than diminished, when the attention of American sportsmen was called to the fact that his tomb was marked by no

stone or tablet to guide the steps of any who sought it. This singular omission was made known through the publication of an excellent article in the columns of the "*Rod and Gun*," under the title of "A visit to 'The Cedars,'" by a genial writer bearing the *nom de plume* of "Scolopax." The effect was spontaneous and wide-spread. An organization was soon effected, which bore the name of *The Frank Forester Memorial Fund Association*, having for its object the collection of a fund to erect in Central Park, New York city, a bronze memorial commemorative of the genius of HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT. The intelligence that *The Newark Herbert Association*, of New Jersey, had been organized, with a view to placing a small monument at his grave, interfered somewhat with the former association and its objects. The project of raising a fund sufficient to procure a memorial was finally abandoned, but the *Newark Herbert Association* placed at the grave of "FRANK FORESTER," on the eighteenth anniversary of his death, a stone in strict conformity with his last wishes. It is worthy of note that the ceremony on this occasion was performed by Rev. Henry Beers Sherman, who volunteered to perform the service at the time of poor Herbert's burial, but was forbidden by the officiating clergyman. The eloquent address delivered on this day, May 19, 1876, emanated from the lips and the heart of Major Halsted; and this was afterward, at the request of the association, embodied in a memorial pamphlet, entitled:

IN MEMORIAM—HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT.

The greatest memorial of this able and popular author, however, consists of his own inimitable works.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

BY WILL WILDWOOD.

HONOR to the sage who declared in favor of "old books, old wine, and old friends." The sentiment awakens a thrill of admiration, and strikes a responsive chord in the hearts of those who revel in classic themes, or all that is noble and time-honored. Old books of real merit, like wine, take piquancy and flavor with age, and they are indeed old friends. To this class undeniably belongs "FRANK FORESTER'S SPORTING SCENES AND CHARACTERS"—old in years, but in tone and sentiment as fresh, delightful and inspiring as the mountain breeze, or the scenes so admirably depicted in their pages.

As the *Sporting Scenes and Characters* of our author have an undying interest, a few reminiscences and anecdotes pertaining thereto, may be found, perhaps, entertaining—especially in view of the fact that the latter were principally real, and not fictitious personages. The character who figures so largely in these pages as "Tom Draw," whom many have deemed the mere creation of Frank Forester's brilliant fancy, represents to the life, rare old Thomas Ward, the host at Warwick, in the days of old. When "Tom Draw" was stricken with blindness, however, in 1846, there remained no charm in the Warwick Woodlands for him who had immortalized both the man and the place. In his "*American Game in its Seasons*" the sporting author thus alludes to his unfortunate friend and the "drowned lands" about Warwick:

“Many a day of glorious sport have I had on those sweet, level meadows, enjoyed with friends long since dispersed and scattered—some dead, untimely, some in far distant lands, some false and some forgetful, and thou, true-hearted, honest, merry, brave Tom Draw; thou whilom king of hosts and emperor of sportsmen, thou, saddest fate of all, smitten, or ere thy prime had passed away, by the most fearful visitation that awaits mankind—the awful doom of blindness! Never again shall I draw trigger on those once loved meadows. The railroad now thunders and whistles close beside them—and every man and boy and fool now sports his fowling-piece; and not a woodcock on the meadows, but, after running the gauntlet of a hundred shots, a hundred volleys, is consigned to the care of some conductor, to be by him delivered to Delmonico or Florence, for the benefit of fat, greasy merchant-princes; and if it were not so, if birds swarmed as of yore in every reedy slank, by every alder-brake, in every willow tuft, the ground is haunted by too many recollections, rife with too many thick succeeding memories to render it a fitting place, to me at least, for pleasurable or gay pursuits.”

The following obituary tribute to the memory of Tom Draw, written by Frank Forester, and published at that time, will be read with interest:

To the Editor of the Middletown, N. Y., Whig Press:

“SIR: I observed in your columns some time since, a notice of the death of ‘Mr. Thomas Ward, of Warwick, for many years a hotel keeper in that village,’ and no more; and, as a very old friend and admirer of that very remarkable person, whose reputation and innocent eccentricities have become known, far beyond the limits of your fair country, so that he had friends far and near, through every quarter of the United States, in which sportsmanship is loved and honored, it has occurred to me that you might desire a few lines from my pen, by which he was first introduced to the world at large, under the transparent anagram of Tom Draw, by which he is now well known from Maine to Mexico.

“So long ago as the Fourth of July, 1831, I, then a stranger in the land, first visited the beautiful little town of Warwick, N. Y.; and was, then, introduced by a friend, who had married in that region, and who has also too early departed, to poor Tom, as the keenest sportsman, and most thorough ‘character’ in the United States.

“Tom was, at that time, in his forty-third year; and,

though his weight was even then above two hundred and fifty pounds, and his circumference some two or three inches greater than his height, about five feet six inches, he was not only one of the most powerful, but one of the most enduring and fleetest-footed men I have ever met with. On the day subsequent to our meeting, we beat the whole country from Warwick to Sugar Loaf, going up, to the south of Wickham's Pond, and returning on the other side of the valley; certainly exceeding thirty miles of distance, including our variations from the true line of route, on one of the hottest days of a hot Summer, killing a great number of woodcock, without a dog, and not returning home until a very late hour in the evening.

"I was, at that time, myself about one-half of Tom's age, prided myself on my pedestrian powers, weighed about one hundred and fifty pounds, and was astonished, beyond all measure, at the manner in which Tom drove ahead, undaunted, at a smashing pace, squelching up to his knees at every step, in the quaking marshes, and tearing his way through bush and briar, unwearied; but it was not, until we were cozily ensconced at supper, over some broiled woodcock and a bottle of cool Heidsick, that I reached my climax of surprise, when I learned that it was infinitely to his wonder, and something to his disgust, that *he* had failed to 'lay out the eternal Englishman, so that he wouldn't want to shoot along with him again, no way that he could fix it.' Thenceforth, we were fast friends, comrades, and boon companions, evermore, until the cold extinguisher of all mortal friendships has come between us, and put out all but fast gratitude and kindest recollection.

"At the time I speak of, Tom was town constable, and held in mighty awe by the most inveterate of misdoers; for there was not the boldest of them who did not succumb unresisting before Tom's potent grip, or the fleetest of foot, whom he could not run down clear in a flat race of a hundred yards.

"From that time, for some fifteen years, until poor Tom lost his sight by the fumes, I believe, of some confounded arsenic in which he was steeping corn to kill crows, not a summer, fall or winter elapsed that we did not shoot together; I, Tom, and some other choice spirits—some now across the seas—some, like poor Tom, in the cold grave, every one of whom learned not only to delight in Tom as the frankest, most jovial, wittiest and best-hearted of companions, but to esteem him as a friend, and look up to him as a man.

“Rare sport have we all had together in the field; rare fun round the festive board; and to the very last, when his weight was above four hundred pounds, and it seemed wonderful that such a mass of flesh should be put in locomotion at all, he would walk his day from morn to sunset with the best of us, though latterly he avoided the steep ground, shooting as well as the best shot of us all, and having forgotten more of woodcraft than the best sportsman of us ever knew.

“In figure, while a young man, he had been delicate, and so slightly built, that he was wont to tell in high glee how, when he was twenty-one, he rejoiced in the sobriquet of ‘Little Thinly;’ this when he resembled a lordly hogshead in bulk and form propped on two casks for supporters; yet, even in age, he was small boned; and it was marvellous to see how ankles so slender, feet so delicate, could bear such prodigious limbs and so ponderous a body at such a rate over difficult ground, and in all manners of weather. His features were well formed and regular, though on a large scale; but there was a look of the readiest and clearest intelligence in his bright, marking eye, which speedily betrayed to the observer a mind of extraordinary quickness, sagacity, humor and imagination, not much indebted to the aid of education, but grandly endowed by exuberant nature, while the blunt, open, frank and liberal face told of as large, as generous, as human a heart within, as ever beat within a mortal bosom.

“Somewhat coarse in his manners, somewhat over rough and free of tongue, somewhat loose of speech, he had yet an internal, delicate sense of right, of feeling and of sympathy, which never let him wound the most sensitive mind; and if he used the largest license of speech, and did at times, it must be admitted, overstep the modesty of nature, it was not in him the lack of wit and emptiness of mind breaking out into profane irreverence, and concealing the void beneath by rude vulgarity, but the exuberance of joviality and genuine wit and humor, overflowing the barriers of convention, and finding scope for the redundant *Pantagruelism* of his genius, in eccentricities of tongue, which were almost pardoned for the treasures they embodied.

“All but for cowardice, and faithlessness, and self, things which had no kindred in the largeness of his nature, he was a very Falstaff, such as Shakspeare drew him in his richest vein of fancy, nor ever dreamed that mortal man should match him in all his better points, untinged with his vices.

“He was an excellent farmer, having, by his own husbandry and handiwork, raised a farm of originally small value, and terribly neglected when he bought it, to a valuable property.

“A better father, a kinder master, a more genial neighbor, a more charitable, or a really honest and better man—in all the grander requisites of manhood, in spite of a rough exterior and an address, shocking to the Pharisees and Levites of the day—than Thomas Ward, of Warwick, never passed through the thorns, the cares and trials of life to the safe haven, whither we must all come at last.

“He was my friend, faithful and just to me, and I, for one of many, am glad and proud that I possessed the right to call him so; I owed him many a debt of gratitude, which I rejoice to record, though the ear that should receive it is deaf to human words forever. I never hope to look upon his like again.

“The lovely country, in the centre of which he lived, is now too full of memories that I should ever seek to see it more; for the brightest sun that ever shone over the pastoral vale, over the great blue hills, the rippling brooks, the shimmering lakes of Warwick and Wawayanda, will evermore be veiled to me by a heavy and heart-shadowing cloud—the memory of my old companion, my true friend, honest, fat Tom, of Warwick.

“Yours ever to command, “FRANK FORESTER.”

Another of the most prominent characters in Frank Forester's Sporting Scenes is Harry Archer, the crack shot, the keen woodsman, and, as it is evident, the author's ideal of a perfect sportsman. That Harry Archer had in real life a nearer model than Mr. Herbert himself is improbable. Drawing from imagination a character to faithfully represent the true-hearted, zealous and progressive sportsman, he very naturally reflected in his pages the characteristics of Frank Forester. The fidelity with which, under the guise of Harry Archer, our author has depicted his own character and personal experience in sportsmanship, may be better understood when it is known that Tim Matlock, the groom and general factotum of blithe Harry, is drawn from real life, and, as one competent to judge has averred, the original was no

other than the Rev. Dean Herbert's game-keeper during Frank's college life. This personage, Harry Lee, is admirably described in Forester's sketch, "The Yorkshire Moors," and on contrasting honest, faithful Tim with the former in action and personal appearance, a striking similarity will at once be perceived. In Harry Archer the fraternity of American sportsmen have long recognized the delineation of a thorough sportsman and model deerstalker, while Tim Matlock is no less perfect in his rôle.

Lovely Maria D'Arcey, the heroine of "MY SHOOTING BOX," as stated elsewhere, represents perfectly Miss Sarah Barker, of Bangor, Maine, Henry William Herbert's bride, who died soon after the erection of "The Cedars." Contemplating the admirable character of this young, beautiful and intellectual lady, one may understand the depth of his bereavement, and the nature of that dark cloud, which, like a pall, shrouded the later years of Herbert's life, rendered, to use his own pathetic words, "of all lives almost the most unhappy."

Another personage who deserves more than a passing notice here, is he who is known as "The Commodore," in "FRANK FORESTER'S SPORTING SCENES AND CHARACTERS." "Toxophilus" thus describes Mr. Livingston, the original:

"One of the most admirable characters in 'The Warwick Woodlands,' is 'A——, the Commodore,' who accompanied the party on their second visit to Orange county. The fat man and A—— were great friends; in fact, although as unlike as possible, A—— was Tom's especial favorite; as he, himself, said, 'I sets great store by A——, I does! and you needn't laugh, boys, for I does a darned sight more than what I does by you.' And yet to Tom's boisterous hilarity there could be no greater contrast than the quiet, unobtrusive politeness of the Commodore, sedately limiting himself to one glass, while Tom's cask-like capacity was a strong point. The real name of this personage was Anson Livingston, Esq., who died only a few years ago, a lawyer by profession, and a thorough gentleman and sportsman. He was an

intimate friend of Herbert, often visited at his house, and their intimacy was mutually beneficial, until it was in a measure terminated by Herbert's removal to Newark. Mr. Livingston often mentioned with much admiration the little episode of the dogs backing each other, one on a stone wall, related at page 112 of the 'Warwick Woodlands.' "

Many others, if not most, of the characters represented in the present work, had "a local habitation and a name;" but it would be difficult now—if indeed it were possible—to unearth the mystery in which, through lapse of time, the romance interwoven, and fictitious names employed, their identity is enveloped. Others, mentioned incidentally, may, in a few instances, be easily recognized beneath the misnomers given. One of the latter, "Pet," the lawyer, alluded to in Tom Draw's relation of Forester's witness-stand experience in "THE DEERSTALKERS," was "Pet" Halsted, of Newark, an able attorney, and, withal, a member of one of the most refined and cultured families of that city. Both "Pet" Halsted and his brother, George B. Halsted, were intimately acquainted with Frank Forester, who, in conversation with the former, would often relate the circumstance with great merriment, as reflecting upon the intelligence (?) of the jury.

"The Tall Spirit" mentioned in the admirable closing scene of "MY SHOOTING BOX," will, of course, be recognized at once as William T. Porter, the editor of *The Spirit of the Times*; one of Frank Forester's dearest friends, known far and wide under his *sobriquet* of the "Tall Son of York." In one of Forester's rarest, raciest and wittiest productions, entitled "The 'Spirit' and its Editor," occurred the annexed description of William T. Porter's personal appearance:

"And still unchanged art thou, amidst the change of all around us, dear old Bill. 'Dear Bill,' if I may parody Dick Steele's apostrophe to Addison; dear Bill, serious or merry, solemn or sentimental, still so calm and serene and softly smiling, in thy ruby-colored waistcoat, with thy

soft silky hair, unchanged by a streak of gray, coolly disparted from thy high, white, unwrinkled forehead, with the luxuriant flow of that grand beard, which a Mussulman might envy, with that mild, clear blue eye, that almost effeminately sweet smile, singularly contrasting the athletic frame, the six-foot-four in his stockinged feet, the chivalrous and gallant spirit, the free, open speech, the high soul made up all of honor, the simple-minded straight-forwardness of thought and action, which go together in thee to make up that noblest of God's works, a real man,

"Loyal and firm, and kind and true,
That fear or falsehood never knew.

"Long may'st thou flourish, dear Bill, the spirit of *The Spirit of the Times*, the glory of not yet utterly degenerated Gotham, the best as the tallest son of York."

Referring to the coterie of wit, talent and versatile powers which congregated in the office of *The Spirit of the Times*, and became familiarly known as the "Old Spirit Family"—a rare and glorious brotherhood—Forester, in the course of the sketch above quoted, remarked:

"The next step in life was the removal to No. 1 Barclay street, for so long a time the local habitation of '*The Spirit*,' in the palmy days of the turf, when the North had stables as well as the South, and when such gentlemen sportsmen, now known to the Union course no longer, as Walter Livingston, and Robert Gillotson, and Major Jones, the Stevens's, and Commodore Stockton, made '*The Spirit*' office their headquarters, and when you could never enter its time-honored door without meeting the best company, and having the best conversation that was to be found going in America.

"In those days, what talent, as well as what good-fellowship, used to assemble within those walls, and rally around old Bill as the centre of magnetic attraction.

* * * * *

"And then that band of brothers, united as one never remembers to have seen, or heard tell of any other brothers, those five, brave, gallant, good, glorious Porters! One by one they have passed away from our sight, though they will never, never pass away from our hearts,

until—the last gone from among us almost since I began to pen these lines—Bill is alone left of all the fair fraternity.

* * * * *

“And long may he remain, for when he is taken hence, as in the necessary course of time he must be—though we may well and reasonably hope that many years of useful and honorable life yet remain to him—his place will never be filled again, as a sportsman, an editor, a man, or a friend.”

Mr. Porter edited, in 1845, a collection of piquant and humorous sketches under the title of “THE BIG BEAR OF ARKANSAS”—this being the opening article. The year following (1846) he edited “THE QUARTER RACE IN KENTUCKY,” as well as an American edition of the famous English sporting work, “Hawker on Shooting.”

William T. Porter did not long survive Frank Forester, but died in July, 1858, leaving in manuscript, partly completed, a biography of the sporting author. The “Life of Porter,” prepared by Francis Brinley, was published in 1860.

The allusion to “the bald benevolence of the Doctor’s classic head,” in connection with the convivial party gathered to drink the “health, long life and happiness,” of Fred. Heneage and his bride, refers, no doubt, to Dr. Porter, an elder brother of William, a classical scholar and tutor, for a time connected with N. P. Willis in editing the *Corsair*, which has been declared “in all probability the best literary journal ever published in New York.”

Lord George Gordon, brought to notice in the same connection, was a fellow-student with Henry William Herbert at Cambridge, and ever after a firm friend. Taking up his residence in Gotham he was for many years noted alike for his brilliant wit, fund of classical information, and taste in dress—a point in which he was regarded as the Chesterfield of the metropolis. Though holding no title to nobility, he was—in common with most of the “Spirit” family—

"one of Nature's noblemen," and he was therefore known for his patrician qualities as *Lord George Gordon*.

Kendall, who "flanked Forester on one hand," on the occasion, was George Wilkins Kendall, of the *New Orleans Picayune*, the leading newspaper of the South in that day. As an editor he was one of the most popular in the land, as a sportsman one of the most accomplished. The friendship existing between Forester and Kendall may be understood from the affectionate dedication of "MY SHOOTING BOX" to the versatile editor of the *Picayune*, when first issued. An idea of the character, humor, and sentiment of that journal in earlier days may be gathered from perusal of the excellent work, "PICKINGS FROM THE PICAYUNE."

Henry Hastings Sibley, to whom that delightful brochure, "THE DEERSTALKERS," was inscribed, was one of the earliest pioneers of Minnesota, of which he is still a resident. Mr. Sibley was the first representative of Minnesota, as a Territory, in Congress; when admitted as a State, its first Governor; and later, when invaded by the treacherous Sioux in 1862, its preserver from the depredations of the Indians. As a general, a statesman, and a sportsman, he is honored throughout the land. Under the *nom de plume* of "Hal, a Dacotah," he has written many of the most faithful sketches descriptive of wild sport in the far West ever penned or published.

George R. Graham, who received a like compliment in the dedication of "THE QUORNDON HOUNDS," when issued, was the founder, and for many years the editor of that excellent monthly, *Graham's Magazine*. In Frank Forester's entertaining sketch on trouting, entitled, "Among the Mountains," the character who figures prominently as Lancelot Langdale was supposed to represent George R. Graham.

Among others who were associated with Frank Forester, either by allusion in his sporting works, or otherwise, may be mentioned "J. Cypress, Jr.," the

delightful sporting writer, rare sportsman, and famous lawyer—in real life, Wm. P. Hawes. Upon the occasion of his death, in 1841, Forester penned a touching tribute to his memory.

Col. T. B. Thorpe, one of Herbert's contemporaries, renowned as an author and artist, was alluded to in the sketch of "The 'Spirit' and its Editor," as author of "THE MYSTERIES OF THE BACKWOODS," an entertaining and instructive work, as well as "THE BIG BEAR OF ARKANSAS," and several others.

Johnson J. Hooper was author of those famous and popular *brochures*, "SIMON SUGGS' ADVENTURES," and "WIDOW RUGBY'S HUSBAND," as well as an excellent little work, "THE DOG AND GUN," dedicated to Frank Forester.

Many readers will remember also as belonging to the "Old Spirit Family," Francis A. Durivage ("The Old 'Un'"), a versatile author, and George P. Burnham ("The Young 'Un'"), joint authors of the mirth-provoking volume, entitled, "STRAY SUBJECTS ARRESTED AND BOUND OVER;" Judge Haliburton, the original "Sam Slick," author of "YANKEE YARNS AND YANKEE LETTERS," etc.; Mr. Thomas Picton, *alias* "The Juvenile," Herbert's co-editor; Col. E. Z. C. Judson, known familiarly as "Ned Buntline;" Alban S. Payne, otherwise "Nicholas Spicer;" and a score of other notables, famous to this day.

No better or more appropriate finish can be given this chapter than the annexed essay from the pen of Frank Forester, descriptive of that broad and fertile valley in Orange county, N. Y., wherein, for the greater part, lie the scenes of this work. By it the reader may more fully understand the nature of that world-famous sporting resort of former years, the woodlands and the drowned lands of Warwick.

THE VALE OF WARWICK.

"From the Village of Warwick the vale still runs in the same direction, westward, with more and more

southing, bearing the same general character, but the country becoming more woody and less adapted to the plow, and the meadows wilder and more marshy, until, beyond the neat hamlet of Vernon, the Wawayanda is joined by two affluents, the one a small stream flowing from a deep mountain tarn on the summit of a very lofty chain, the Wawayanda Lake, vulgarly, Double Pond, famous for the great trout which are taken, even to seven pounds' weight, in its almost unfathomable waters—the other a large, rapid brook, flowing to the northward past the county town of Sussex. Immediately after its junction with these, it also turns to the northeastward, round the extremity of the 'Ridge,' which here subsides into a low, wooded promontory, broken into capes and islands, as they are termed, among the vast alluvial plains and marshy meadows, liable to constant inundation, and thence called the drowned lands, extending over thousands of acres, nearly to the county town of Goshen—famous, like its antitype of old, for the abundance of its herds, the richness of its milk, and the golden lustre of its unrivalled butter, equal to that which the patriotic murderess of Israel set before Sisera in a lordly dish.

“Here, then, where the Wawayanda, increased by the dark current of the Quaker Creek, and the swift, translucent waters of the Papakating, rebuffed by the spurs of the western Shawangunks, shoots off at right angles to its former course, and assumes with its new north-easterly direction the new name of Wallkill, the vale of Warwick terminates, after a course of about twelve miles from the peak of Sugar Loaf to the lower ridges of the Shawangunk, which bars its mouth in the county of Sussex, in New Jersey.

“Through its length and breadth it is one of the most fertile, the most beautiful and the most Arcadian regions of the United States; poverty, in its lower or more squalid aspects, if not in any real or tangible shape, is unknown within its precincts; its farmers, the genuine, old, solid, yeomanry of the land, the backbone and bulwark of the country, rich as their teeming pastures, hospitable as their warm hearths and ever-open doors, staunch and firm as the everlasting hills, among which in truly pleasant places their lines have fallen, would be the pride of any nation, kingdom, or republic; its women are among the fairest daughters of a country where beauty is the rule rather than the exception with the sex, so that the excellence of Orange County butter is not

more proverbial than are the charms of Orange County beauty.

“Nor is the vale of Warwick void of a certain share of historical renown, for it is on record that, during the war of the Revolution, it turned out not a few of the boldest and most daring partisans, among whom not the least celebrated was that far-famed receiver, the Red-Spur of the Ramapo. And again, in the war of 1812, were they not Orange County boys, and many of them Warwickers, who were encamped on the heights of Fort Washington; and who, if they had no opportunity of proving their valor against the Britishers, showed themselves, at least, most indefatigable skirmishers in market gardens and apple orchards, most deadly enemies to all henroosts and pigsties, from the classic waters of Spuyten Duyvil creek to the purlieus of the Hook? To senatorial honors, likewise, may the beautiful old vale aspire, for Seward, the pet of Western York and pride of Abolitionists, the aspirant for Gubernatorial rank in the Empire State, perhaps one day to be the candidate for a Whig, free-soil presidential vote—is he not of her beloved sons—born within sight of Sugar Loaf, and within hail of the clear Wawayanda?

“Not, however, that the wild horns of the bold republican riders, and the crack of their true rifles used to awaken the responsive echoes of the mountain glens and passes, from the dimwood waters of the pure Truxedo to the foaming rapids of the swift Wynockie—not, however, that her bold militiamen patriotically scared the old women at Kingsbridge and the spinsters of Spuyten Duyvil out of what small share of their seven senses the rumors of the wars and the anticipation of the rude courtship of approaching British grenadiers had left to them—not, however, that she boasts herself mother of the puissant Seward, do I honor and love the beautiful vale of Warwick. The memories which dwell most lovingly in my mind are not those of wars and conflicts, either in the field or in the forum, but those of pleasant sports by day, of jovial boards by night, of dear, unforgotten friendships, of happy times that never can return, of sweet dreams cherished amid the lovely landscapes and by the gushing rills, which from the first time I beheld them made my heart swell and throb from their similitude to the beloved scenes of my boyhood to the rich, green, horse pastures and hanging woods of my native Wharfdale; to the craggy, limestone rivers of Airdale, and Netherdale, and Wensleydale; to

the dingly dells and ghylls of the West Riding; to the mountain tarn of Malham and the gushing cascades of Gordale; dearer to me; (like Abana and Pharpar, waters of Damascus, to the patriotic Syrian), than all the waters of Israel.

“Sweet vale of Warwick, sweet Warwick, loveliest village of the vale, it may be I shall never see you more, for the silver cord is loosened, the golden bowl is broken, which most attached me to your quiet and sequestered shades; and void, indeed, would be the landscape, and mute its merry echoes, when unrelieved by the puissant form, awakened by the hearty voice of my old friend and boon companion. But seen, or unseen, my mind is full of you—your landscapes float before my eyes, now veiled in the purple haze, and shimmering in the golden light of Indian-summer sunsets; now smiling serene in the still, solemn lustre of the broad harvest moon; now bursting into the gay and flowery flush of early spring time; now sleeping in the silvery embrace of the pure, sheeted snow; beautiful equally in all and every guise.

“May blessings be about you, beautiful vale of Warwick; may your fields and forests be as green, your waters as bright, the cattle on your hundred hills as fruitful as in the days of old, when my yet youthful foot pressed their green sward, my yet youthful lungs drew life from the inspiration of your clear mountain breezes! May independence, innocence and plenty be the inheritance of your sons, the dowry of your daughters; may the lines of no hideous, utilitarian railroad ever deface the velvet of your green pastures, the fiendish howl of that veriest car of Jugger-naut, the thrice-accursed locomotive, never awake the echoes of your breezy hills—may you be, as nature only can, of all the works of God, forever beautiful, unchanged and young; and so farewell, fair vale of Warwick.”

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THE WARWICK WOODLANDS

MY FIRST VISIT.

DAY THE FIRST.

It was a fine October evening when I was sitting on the back stoop of his cheerful little bachelor's establishment in Mercer street, with my old friend and comrade, Henry Archer. Many a frown of fortune had we two weathered out together; in many of her brightest smiles had we two revelled—never was there a stauncher friend, a merrier companion, a keener sportsman, or a better fellow, than this said Harry; and here had we two met, three thousand miles from home, after almost ten years of separation, just the same careless, happy, dare-all do-no-goods that we were when we parted in St. James's street,—he for the West, I for the Eastern World—he to fell trees, and build log huts in the back-woods of Canada,—I to shoot tigers and drink arrack punch in the Carnatic. The world had wagged with us as with most others: now up, now down, and laid us to, at last, far enough from the goal for which we started—so that, as I have said already, on landing in New York, having heard nothing of him for ten years, whom the deuce should I tumble on but that same worthy, snugly housed, with a neat bachelor's ménage, and every thing ship-shape about him?—So, in the natural course of things, we were at once inseparables.

Well—as I said before, it was a bright October evening, with the clear sky, rich sunshine, and brisk breezy freshness, which indicate that loveliest of the American months,—dinner was over, and with a pitcher of the liquid ruby of Latour, a brace of half-pint beakers, and a score—my contribution—of those most exquisite of smokables, the true old Manilla cheroots, we were consoling the inward man in a way that would have opened the eyes, with abhorrent admiration, of any advocate

of that coldest of comforts—cold water—who should have got a chance peep at our snuggery.

Suddenly, after a long pause, during which he had been stimulating his ideas by assiduous fumigation, blowing off his steam in a long vapory cloud that curled a minute afterward about his temples,—“What say you, Frank, to a start to-morrow?” exclaimed Harry,—“and a week’s right good shooting?”

“Why, as for that,” said I, “I wish for nothing better—but where the deuce would you go to get shooting?”

“Never fash your beard, man,” he replied, “I’ll find the ground and the game too, so you’ll find share of the shooting!—Holloa! there—Tim, Tim Matlock.”

And in brief space that worthy minister of mine host’s pleasures made his appearance, smoothing down his short black hair, clipped in the orthodox bowl fashion, over his bluff good-natured visage with one hand, while he employed its fellow in hitching up a pair of most voluminous unmentionables, of thick Yorkshire cord.

A character was Tim—and now I think of it, worthy of brief description. Born, I believe—bred, certainly, in a hunting stable, far more of his life passed in the saddle than elsewhere, it was not a little characteristic of my friend Harry to have selected this piece of Yorkshire oddity as his especial body servant; but if the choice were queer, it was at least successful, for an honest, more faithful, hard-working, and withal, better hearted, and more humorous varlet never drew curry-comb over horse-hide, or clothes-brush over broad-cloth.

His visage was, as I have said already, bluff and good-natured, with a pair of hazel eyes, of the smallest—but, at the same time, of the very merriest—twinkling from under the thick black eye-brows, which were the only hairs suffered to grace his clean-shaved countenance. An indescribable pug nose, and a good clean cut mouth, with a continual dimple at the left corner, made up his phiz. For the rest, four feet ten inches did Tim stand in his stockings, about two-ten of which were monopolized by his back, the shoulders of which would have done honor to a six foot pugilist,—his legs, though short and bowed a little outward, by continual horse exercise, were right tough serviceable members, and I have seen them bearing their owner or through mud and mire, when straighter, longer, and more fairly proportioned limbs were at an awful discount.

Depositing his hat then on the floor, smoothing his hair, and hitching up his smalls, and striving most laboriously not to grin till he should have cause, stood Tim, like "Giafar awaiting *his master's award!*"

"Tim!" said Harry Archer—

"Sur!" said Tim.

"Tim! Mr. Forester and I are talking of going up to-morrow—what do you say to it?"

"Oop yonner?" queried Tim, in the most extraordinary West-Riding Yorkshire, indicating the direction, by pointing his right thumb over his left shoulder—"Weel, Ay'se nought to say about it—not Ay!"

"Soh! the cattle are all right, and the wagon in good trim, and the dogs in exercise, are they?"

"Ay'se warrant um!"

"Well, then, have all ready for a start at six to-morrow,—put Mr. Forester's Manton alongside my Joe Spurling in the top tray of the case, my single gun and my double rifle in the lower, and see the magazine well filled—the Diamond gun-powder, you know, from Mr. Brough's. You'll put up what Mr. Forester will want, for a week, you know—he does not know the country yet, Tim;—and, hark you, what wine have I at Tom Draw's?"

"No but a case of claret."

"I thought so, then away with you! down to the Baron's and get two baskets of the Star, and stop at Fulton Market, and get the best half hundred round of spiced beef you can find—and then go up to Starke's at the Octagon, and get a gallon of his old Ferintosh—that's all, Tim—off with you!—No! stop a minute!" and he filled up a beaker and handed it to the original, who, shutting both his eyes, suffered the fragrant claret to roll down his gullet in the most scientific fashion, and then, with what he called a bow, turned right about, and exit.

The sun rose bright on the next morning, and half an hour before the appointed time, Tim entered my bed-chamber, with a cup of mocha, and the intelligence that "Measter had been oop this hour and better, and did na like to be kept waiting!"—so up I jumped, and scarcely had got through the business of rigging myself, before the rattle of wheels announced the arrival of the wagon.

And a model was that shooting wagon—a long, light-bodied box, with a low rail—a high seat and dash in front, and a low

servant's seat behind, with lots of room for four men and as many dogs, with guns and luggage, and all appliances to boot, enough to last a month, stowed away out of sight, and out of reach of weather. The nags, both nearly thorough-bred, fifteen two inches high, stout, clean-limbed, active animals—the off-side horse a gray, almost snow-white—the near, a dark chestnut, nearly black—with square docks setting admirably off their beautiful round quarters, high crests, small blood-like heads, and long thin manes—spoke volumes for Tim's stable science; for though their ribs were slightly visible, their muscles were well filled, and hard as granite. Their coats glanced in the sunshine—the white's like statuary marble; the chestnut's like high polished copper—in short the whole turn-out was perfect.

The neat black harness, relieved merely by a crest, with every strap that could be needed, in its place, and not one buckle or one thong superfluous; the bright steel curbs, with the chains jingling as the horses tossed and pawed impatient for a start; the tapering holly whip; the bear-skins covering the seats; the top-coats spread above them—every thing, in a word, without bordering on the slang, was perfectly correct and gnostic.

Four dogs—a brace of setters of the light active breed, one of which will out-work a brace of the large, lumpy, heavy-headed dogs,—one red, the other white and liver, both with black noses, their legs and sterns beautifully feathered, and their hair, glossy and smooth as silk, showing their excellent condition—and a brace of short-legged, bony, liver-colored spaniels—with their heads thrust one above the other, over or through the railings, and their tails waving with impatient joy—occupied the after portion of the wagon.

Tim, rigged in plain gray frock, with leathers and white tops, stood, in true tiger fashion, at the horses' heads, with the fore-finger of his right hand resting upon the curb of the gray horse, as with his left he rubbed the nose of the chestnut; while Harry, cigar in mouth, was standing at the wheel, reviewing with a steady and experienced eye the gear, which seemed to give him perfect satisfaction. The moment I appeared on the steps,

“In with you, Frank—in with you,” he exclaimed, disengaging the hand-reins from the terrets into which they had been thrust, “I have been waiting here these five minutes. Jump up, Tim!”

And, gathering the reins up firmly, he mounted by the wheel,

tucked the top-coat about his legs, shook out the long lash of his tandem whip, and lapped it up in good style.

"I always drive with one of these"—he said, half apologetically, as I thought—"they are so handy on the road for the cur dogs, when you have setters with you—they plague your life out else. Have you the pistol-case in, Tim, for I don't see it?"

"All raight, sur," answered he, not over well pleased, as it seemed, that it should even be suspected that he could have forgotten any thing—"All raight!"

"Go along, then," cried Harry, and at the word the high bred nags went off; and though my friend was too good and too old a hand to worry his cattle at the beginning of a long day's journey—many minutes had not passed before we found ourselves on board the ferry-boat, steaming it merrily towards the Jersey shore.

"A quarter past six to the minute," said Harry, as we landed at Hoboken.

"Let *Shot* and *Chase* run, Tim, but keep the spaniels in till we pass Hackensack."

"Awa wi ye, ye rascals," exclaimed Tim, and out went the high blooded dogs upon the instant, yelling and jumping in delight about the horses—and off we went, through the long sandy street of Hoboken, leaving the private race-course of that stanch sportsman, Mr. Stevens, on the left, with several powerful horses taking their walking exercise in their neat body clothes.

"That puts me in mind, Frank," said Harry, as he called my attention to the thorough-breds, "we must be back next Tuesday for the Beacon Races—the new course up there on the hill; you can see the steps that lead to it—and now is not this lovely?" he continued, as we mounted the first ridge of Weehawken, and looked back over the beautiful broad Hudson, gemmed with a thousand snowy sails of craft or shipping—"Is not this lovely, Frank? and, by the by, you will say, when we get to our journey's end, you never drove through prettier scenery in your life. Get away, Bob, you villain—nibbling, nibbling at your curb! get away, lads!"

And away we went at a right rattling pace over the hills, and through the cedar swamp; and, passing through a toll-gate, stopped with a sudden jerk at a long low tavern on the left-hand side.

“We must stop here, Frank. My old friend, Ingliss, a brother trigger, too, would think the world was coming to an end if I drove by—twenty-nine minutes these six miles,” he added, looking at his watch, “that will do! Now, Tim, look sharp—just a sup of water! Good day—good day to you, Mr. Ingliss; now for a glass of your milk punch”—and mine host disappeared, and in a moment came forth with two rummers of the delicious compound, a big bright lump of ice bobbing about in each among the nutmeg.

“What, off again for Orange county, Mr. Archer? I was telling the old woman yesterday that we should have you by before long; well, you’ll find cock pretty plenty, I expect; there was a chap by here from Ulster—let me see, what day was it—Friday, I guess—with produce, and he was telling, they have had no cold snap yet up there! Thank you, sir, good luck to you!”

And off we went again, along a level road, crossing the broad, slow river from whence it takes its name, into the town of Hackensack.

“We breakfast here, Frank”—as he pulled up beneath the low Dutch shed projecting over half the road in front of the neat tavern—“How are you, Mr. Vanderbeck—we want a beef-steak, and a cup of tea, as quick as you can give it us; we’ll make the tea ourselves; bring in the black tea, Tim—the nags as usual.”

“Aye! aye! sur”—“tak them out—leave t’ harness on, all but their bridles”—to an old gray-headed hostler. “Whisp off their legs a bit; Ay will be oot enoo!”

After as good a breakfast as fresh eggs, good country bread—worth ten times the poor trash of city bakers—prime butter, cream, and a fat steak could furnish, at a cheap rate, and with a civil and obliging landlord, away we went again over the red-hills—an infernal ugly road, sandy, and rough, and stony—for ten miles farther to New Prospect.

“Now you shall see some scenery worth looking at,” said Harry, as we started again, after watering the horses, and taking in a bag with a peck of oats—“to feed at three o’clock, Frank, when we stop to grub, which must do *al fresco*—” my friend explained—“for the landlord, who kept the only tavern on the road, went West this summer, bit by the land mania, and there is now no stopping place ’twixt this and Warwick,” naming the village for which we were bound. “You got that beef boiled, Tim?”

“Ay’d been a foul else, and aye so often oop t’ road too,” answered he with a grin, “and t’ moostard is mixed, and t’ pilot biscuit in, and a good bit o’ Cheshire cheese! wee’s doo, Ay reckon. Ha! ha! ha!”

And now my friend’s boast was indeed fulfilled; for when we had driven a few miles farther, the country became undulating, with many and bright streams of water; the hill sides clothed with luxuriant woodlands, now in their many-colored garb of autumn beauty; the meadow-land rich in unchanged fresh greenery—for the summer had been mild and rainy—with here and there a buckwheat stubble showing its ruddy face, replete with promise of quail in the present, and of hot cakes in future; and the bold chain of mountains, which, under many names, but always beautiful and wild, sweeps from the Highlands of the Hudson, west and southwardly, quite through New Jersey, forming a link between the White and Green Mountains of New Hampshire and Vermont, and the more famous Alleghanies of the South.

A few miles farther yet, the road wheeled round the base of the Tourne Mountain, a magnificent bold hill, with a bare craggy head, its sides and skirts thick set with cedars and hickory—entering a defile through which the Ramapo, one of the loveliest streams eye ever looked upon, comes rippling with its crystal waters over bright pebbles, on its way to join the two kindred rivulets which form the fair Passaic. Throughout the whole of that defile, nothing can possibly surpass the loveliness of nature; the road hard, and smooth, and level, winding and wheeling parallel to the gurgling river, crossing it two or three times in each mile, now on one side, and now on the other—the valley now barely broad enough to permit the highway and the stream to pass between the abrupt masses of rock and forest, and now expanding into rich basins of green meadow-land, the deepest and most fertile possible—the hills of every shape and size—here bold, and bare, and rocky—there swelling up in grand round masses, pile above pile of verdure, to the blue firmament of autumn. By and by we drove through a thriving little village, nestling in a hollow of the hills, beside a broad bright pond, whose waters keep a dozen manufactories of cotton and of iron—with which mineral these hills abound—in constant operation; and passing by the tavern, the departure of whose owner Harry had so pathetically mourned, we wheeled again round a projecting spur of hill into a narrower defile, and reached

another hamlet, far different in its aspect from the busy bustling place we had left some five miles behind.

There were some twenty houses, with two large mills of solid masonry ; but of these not one building was now tenanted ; the roof-trees broken, the doors and shutters either torn from their hinges, or flapping wildly to and fro ; the mill wheels cumbering the stream with masses of decaying timber, and the whole presenting a most desolate and mournful aspect.

"Its story is soon told," Harry said, catching my inquiring glance—"a speculating, clever New York merchant—a water-power—a failure—and a consequent desertion of the project ; but we must find a birth among the ruins !"

And as he spoke, turning a little off the road, he pulled up on the green sward ; "there's an old stable here that has a manger in it yet ! Now, Tim, look sharp !"

And in a twinkling the horses were loosed from the wagon, the harness taken off and hanging on the corners of the ruined hovels, and Tim hissing and rubbing away at the gray horse, while Harry did like duty on the chestnut, in a style that would have done no shame to Melton Mowbray !

"Come, Frank, make yourself useful ! Get out the round of beef, and all the rest of the provant—it's on the rack behind ; you'll find all right there. Spread our table-cloth on that flat stone by the waterfall, under the willow ; clap a couple of bottles of the Baron's champagne into the pool there underneath the fall ; let's see whether your Indian campaigning has taught you anything worth knowing !"

To work I went at once, and by the time I had got through—"Come, Tim," I heard him say, "I've got the rough dirt off this fellow, you must polish him, while I take a wash, and get a bit of dinner. Holloa ! Frank, are you ready !"

And he came bounding down to the water's edge, with his Newmarket coat in hand, and sleeves rolled up to the elbows, plunged his face into the cool stream, and took a good wash of his soiled hands in the same natural basin. Five minutes afterward we were employed most pleasantly with the spiced beef, white biscuit, and good wine, which came out of the waterfall as cool as Gunter could have made it with all his icing. When we had pretty well got through, and were engaged with our cheroots, up came Tim Matlock.

"T' horses have got through wi' t' corn—they have fed rare-

ly—so I harnessed them, sur, all to the bridles—we can start when you will.”

“Sit down, and get your dinner then, sir—there’s a heel tap in that bottle we have left for you—and when you have done, put up the things, and we’ll be off. I say, Frank, let us try a shot with the pistols—I’ll get the case—stick up that fellow—commoner upon the fence there, and mark off a twenty paces.”

The marking irons were produced, and loaded—“Fire—one two—three”—bang! and the shivering of the glass announced that never more would that chap hold the generous liquor; the ball had struck it plump in the centre, and broken off the whole above the shoulder, for it was fixed neck downward on the stake.

“It is my turn now,” said I; and more by luck, I fancy, than by skill, I took the neck off, leaving nothing but the thick ring of the mouth still sticking on the summit of the fence.

“I’ll hold you a dozen of my best Regalias against as many of Manillas, that I break the ring.”

“Done, Harry!”

“Done!”

Again the pistol cracked, and the unerring ball drove the small fragment into a thousand splinters.

“That fatched ’um!” exclaimed Tim, who had come up to announce all ready. “Ecod, measter Frank, you munna wager i’ that gate* wi’ master, or my name beant Tim, but thou’lt be clean bamboozled.”

Well, not to make a short story long, we got under way again, and, with speed unabated, spanked along at full twelve miles an hour for five miles farther. There, down a wild looking glen, on the left hand, comes brawling, over stump and stone, a tributary streamlet, by the side of which a rough track, made by the charcoal burners and the iron miners, intersects the main road; and up this miserable looking path, for it was little more, Harry wheeled at full trot.

“Now for twelve miles of mountain, the roughest road and wildest country you ever saw crossed in a phaeton, good master Frank.”

And wild it was, indeed, and rough enough in all conscience; narrow, unfenced in many places, winding along the brow of precipices without rail or breast-work, encumbered with huge blocks of stone, and broken by the summer rains! An English

* Gate—Yorkshire! Anglice, way!

stage coachman would have stared aghast at the steep zigzags up the hills, the awkward turns on the descents, the sudden pitches, with now an unsafe bridge, and now a stony ford at the bottom; but through all this, the delicate quick finger, keen eye, and cool head of Harry, assisted by the rare mouths of his exquisitely bitted cattle, piloted us at the rate of full ten miles the hour; the scenery, through which the wild track ran, being entirely of the most wild and savage character of woodland; the bottom filled with gigantic timber trees, cedar, and pine, and hemlock, with a dense undergrowth of rhododendron, calmia, and azalia, which, as my friend informed me, made the whole mountains in the summer season one rich bed of bloom. About six miles from the point where we had entered them we scaled the highest ridge of the hills, by three almost precipitous zigzags, the topmost ledge paved by a stratum of broken shaley limestone; and, passing at once from the forest into well cultivated fields, came on a new and lovelier prospect—a narrow deep vale scarce a mile in breadth—scooped, as it were, out of the mighty mountains which embosomed it on every side—in the highest state of culture, with rich orchards, and deep meadows, and brown stubbles, whereon the shocks of maize stood fair and frequent; and westward of the road, which, diving down obliquely to the bottom, loses itself in the woods of the opposite hill-side, and only becomes visible again when it emerges to cross over the next summit—the loveliest sheet of water my eyes has ever seen, varying from half a mile to a mile in breadth, and about five miles long, with shores indented deeply with the capes and promontories of the wood-clothed hills, which sink abruptly to its very margin.

“That is the Greenwood Lake, Frank, called by the monsters here Long Pond!—‘the fiends receive their souls therefor,’ as Walter Scott says—in my mind prettier than Lake George by far, though known to few except chance sportsmen like myself! Full of fish, perch of a pound in weight, and yellow bass in the deep waters, and a good sprinkling of trout, towards this end! Ellis Ketchum killed a five-pounder there this spring! and heaps of summer-duck, the loveliest in plumage of the genus, and the best too, *me judice*, excepting only the inimitable canvass-back. There are a few deer, too, in the hills, though they are getting scarce of late years. There, from that headland, I killed one, three summers since; I was placed at a stand by the lake’s edge, and the dogs drove him right down to me; but I

got too eager, and he heard or saw me, and so fetched a turn; but they were close upon him, and the day was hot, and he was forced to soil. I never saw him till he was in the act of leaping from a bluff of ten or twelve feet into the deep lake, but I pitched up my rifle at him, a snap shot! as I would my gun at a cock in a summer brake, and by good luck sent my ball through his heart. There is a finer view yet when we cross this hill, the Bellevalle mountain; look out, for we are just upon it; there! Now admire!"

And on the summit he pulled up, and never did I see a landscape more extensively magnificent. Ridge after ridge the mountain sloped down from our feet into a vast rich basin ten miles at least in breadth, by thirty, if not more, in length, girdled on every side by mountains—the whole diversified with wood and water, meadow, and pasture-land, and corn-field—studded with small white villages—with more than one bright lakelet glittering like beaten gold in the declining sun, and several isolated hills standing up boldly from the vale!

"Glorious indeed! Most glorious!" I exclaimed.

"Right, Frank," he said; "a man may travel many a day, and not see any thing to beat the vale of Sugar-loaf—so named from that cone-like hill, over the pond there—that peak is eight hundred feet above tide water. Those blue hills, to the far right, are the Hudson Highlands; that bold bluff is the far-famed Anthony's Nose; that ridge across the vale, the second ridge I mean, is the Shawangunks; and those three rounded summits, farther yet—those are the Kaatskills! But now a truce with the romantic, for there lies Warwick, and this keen mountain air has found me a fresh appetite!"

Away we went again, rattling down the hills, nothing daunted at their steep pitches, with the nags just as fresh as when they started, champing and snapping at their curbs, till on a table-land above the brook, with the tin steeple of its church peering from out the massy foliage of sycamore and locust, the haven of our journey lay before us.

"Hilloa, hill-oa ho! whoop! who-whoop!" and with a cheery shout, as we clattered across the wooden bridge, he roused out half the population of the village.

"Ya ha ha!—ya yah!" yelled a great woolly-headed coal-black negro. "Here 'm massa Archer back again—massa ben well, I spect—"

"Well—to be sure I have, Sam," cried Harry. "How's old

Poll? Bid her come up to Draw's to-morrow night—I've got a red and yellow frock for her—a deuce of a concern!"

"Yah ha! yah ha ha yaah!" and amid a most discordant chorus of African merriment, we passed by a neat farm-house shaded by two glorious locusts on the right, and a new red brick mansion, the pride of the village, with a flourishing store on the left—and wheeled up to the famous Tom Draw's tavern—a long white house with a piazza six feet wide, at the top of eight steep steps, and a one-story kitchen at the end of it; a pump with a gilt pine-apple at the top of it, and horse-trough. a wagon shed and stable sixty feet long; a sign-post with an indescribable female figure swinging upon it, and an ice house over the way!

Such was the house, before which we pulled up just as the sun was setting, amid a gabbling of ducks, a barking of terriers, mixed with the deep bay of two or three large heavy fox-hounds which had been lounging about in the shade, and a peal of joyous welcome from all beings, quadruped or biped, within hearing.

"Hulloa! boys!" cried a deep hearty voice from within the bar-room. "Hulloa! boys! Walk in! walk in! What the eternal h—ll are you about there?"

Well, we did walk into a large neat bar-room, with a bright hickory log crackling upon the hearth-stone, a large round table in one corner, covered with draught-boards, and old newspapers, among which showed pre-eminent the "Spirit of the Times;" a range of pegs well stored with great-coats, fishing-rods, whips, game-bags, spurs, and every other stray appurtenance of sporting, gracing one end; while the other was more gaily decorated by the well furnished bar, in the right-hand angle of which my eye detected in an instant a handsome nine pound double barrel, an old six foot Queen Ann's tower-musket, and a long smooth-bored rifle; and last, not least, outstretched at easy length upon the counter of his bar, to the left-hand of the gang-way—the right side being more suitably decorated with tumblers, and decanters of strange compounds—supine, with fair round belly towering upward, and head voluptuously pillowed on a heap of wagon cushions—lay in his glory—but no! hold!—the end of a chapter is no place to introduce—Tom Draw!*

* It is almost a painful task to read over and revise this chapter. The "twenty years ago" is too keenly visible to the mind's eye in every line. Of

DAY THE SECOND.

MUCH as I had heard of Tom Draw, I was I must confess, taken altogether aback when I, for the first time, set eyes upon him. I had heard Harry Archer talk of him fifty times as a crack shot; as a top sawyer at a long day's fag; as the man of all others he would choose as his mate, if he were to shoot a match, two against two—what then was my astonishment at beholding this worthy, as he reared himself slowly from his recumbent position? It is true, I had heard his sobriquet, "Fat Tom," but, Heaven and Earth! such a mass of beef and brandy as stood before me, I had never even dreamt of. About five feet six inches at the very utmost in the perpendicular, by six or—"by'r lady"—nearer seven in circumference, weighing, at the least computation, two hundred and fifty pounds, with a broad jolly face, its every feature—well-formed and handsome, rather than otherwise—mantling with an expression of the most perfect excellence of heart and temper, and overshadowed by a vast mass of brown hair, sprinkled pretty well with gray!—Down he plumped from the counter with a thud that made the whole floor shake, and with a hand outstretched, that might have done for a Goliath, out he strode to meet us.

"Why, hulloa! hulloa! Mr. Archer," shaking his hand till I thought he would have dragged the arm clean out of the socket—"How be you, boy? How be you?"

"Right well, Tom, can't you see? Why confound you, you've grown twenty pound heavier since July!—but here, I'm

the persons mentioned in its pages, more than one have passed away from our world forever; and even the natural features of rock, wood, and river, in other countries so vastly more enduring than their perishable owners, have been so much altered by the march of improvement, Heaven save the mark! that the traveller up the Erie railroad, will certainly not recognise in the description of the vale of Ramapo, the hill-sides all denuded of their leafy honors, the bright streams dammed by unsightly mounds and changed into foul stagnant pools, the snug country tavern deserted for a huge hideous barnlike depot, and all the lovely sights and sweet harmonies of nature defaced and drowned by the deformities consequent on a railroad, by the disgusting roar and screech of the steam-engine.

One word to the wise! Let no man be deluded by the following pages, into the setting forth for Warwick *now* in search of sporting. These things are strictly as they were *twenty years ago*! Mr. Seward, in his zeal for the improvement of Chatauque and Cattaraugus, has certainly destroyed the cock-shooting of Orange county. A sportsman's benison to him therefor'

losing all my manners!—this is Frank Forester, whom you have heard me talk about so often! He dropped down here out of the moon, Tom, I believe! at least I thought about as much of seeing the man in the moon, as of meeting *him* in this wooden country—but here he is, as you see, come all the way to take a look at the natives. And so, you see, as you're about the greatest curiosity I know of in these parts, I brought him straight up here to take a peep! Look at him, Frank—look at him well! Now, did you ever see, in all your life, so extraordinary an old devil?—and yet, Frank, which no man could possibly believe, the old fat animal has some good points about him—he can walk *some!* shoot, as he says, *first best!* and drink—good Lord, how he can drink!”

“And that reminds me,” exclaimed Tom, who with a ludicrous mixture of pleasure, bashfulness, and mock anger, had been listening to what he evidently deemed a high encomium; “that *we* hav'nt dranked yet; have you quit drink, Archer, since I was to York? What'll you take, Mr. Forester? Gin? yes, I have got some prime gin! You never sent me up them groceries though, Archer; well, then, here's luck! What, Yorkshire, is that you? I should ha' thought now, Archer, you'd have cleared that lazy Injun out afore this time!”

“Whoy, measter Draa—what 'na loike's that kind o'talk?—coom coom now, where'll Ay tak t' things tull?”

“Put Mr. Forester's box in the bed-room off the parlor—mine up stairs, as usual,” cried Archer. “Look sharp and get the traps out. Now, Tom, I suppose you have got no supper for us?”

“Cooper, Cooper! you snooping little devil,” yelled Tom, addressing his second hope, a fine dark-eyed, bright-looking lad of ten or twelve years; “Don't you see Mr. Archer's come?—away with you and light the parlor fire, look smart now, or I'll cure you! Supper—you're always eat! eat! eat! or, drink! drink!—*drunk!* Yes! supper; we've got pork! and chickens——”

“Oh! d—n your pork,” said I, “salt as the ocean I suppose!” “And double d—n your chickens,” chimed in Harry, “old superannuated cocks which must be caught *now*, and then beheaded, and then soused into hot water to fetch off the feathers; and save you lazy devils the trouble of picking them. No, no, Tom! get us some fresh meat for to-morrow; and for to-night let us have some hot potatoes, and some bread and but-

ter, and we'll find beef; eh, Frank? and now look sharp, for we must be up in good time to-morrow, and, to be so, we must to bed betimes. And now, Tom, are there any cock?"

"Cock! yes, I guess there be, and quail, too, pretty plenty! quite a smart chance of them, and not a shot fired among them this fall, any how!"

"Well, which way must we beat to-morrow? I calculate to shoot three days with you here; and, on Wednesday night, when we get in, to hitch up and drive into Sullivan, and see if we can't get a deer or two! You'll go, Tom?"

"Well, well, we'll see any how; but for to-morrow, why, I guess we must beat the 'Squire's swamp-hole first; there's ten or twelve cock there, I know; I see them there myself last Sunday; and then acrost them buck-wheat stubbles, and the big bog meadow, there's a *drove* of quail there; two or three bevys got in one, I reckon; leastwise I counted thirty-three last Friday was a week; and through Seer's big swamp, over to the great spring!"

"How is Seer's swamp? too wet, I fancy," Archer interposed, "at least I noticed, from the mountain, that all the leaves were changed in it, and that the maples were quite bare."

"Pretty fair, pretty fair, I guess," replied stout Tom, "I harnt been there myself though, but Jem was down with the hounds arter an old fox t'other day; and sure enough *he said* the cock kept flopping up quite thick afore him; but then the critter *will* lie, Harry; he *will* lie like thunder, you know; but somehow I conceaits there be cock there too; and then, as I was saying, we'll stop at the great spring and get a bite of summat, and then beat Hell-hole; you'll have sport there for sartin! What dogs have you got with you, Harry?"

"Your old friends, *Shot* and *Chase*, and a couple of spaniels for thick covert!"

"Now, gentlemen, your suppers are all ready."

"Come, Tom," cried Archer; "you must take a bite with us—Tim, bring us in three bottles of champagne, and lots of ice, do you hear?"

And the next moment we found ourselves installed in a snug parlor, decorated with a dozen sporting prints, a blazing hickory fire snapping and sputtering and roaring in a huge Franklin stove; our luggage safely stowed in various corners, and Archer's double gun-case propped on two chairs below the window.

An old-fashioned round table, covered with clean white linen of domestic manufacture, displayed the noble round of beef which we had brought up with us, flanked by a platter of magnificent potatoes, pouring forth volumes of dense steam through the cracks in their dusky skins; a lordly dish of butter, that might have pleased the appetite of Sisera; while eggs and ham, and pies of apple, mince-meat, cranberry, and custard, occupied every vacant space, save where two ponderous pitchers, mantling with ale and cider, and two respectable square bottles, labelled "Old Rum" and "Brandy—1817," relieved the prospect. Before we had sat down, Timothy entered, bearing a horse bucket filled to the brim with ice, from whence protruded the long necks and split corks of three champagne bottles.

"Now, Tim," said Archer, "get your own supper, when you've finished with the cattle; feed the dogs well to-night; and then to bed. And hark you, call me at five in the morning; we shall want you to carry the game-bag and the drinkables; take care of yourself, Tim, and good night!"

"No need to tell him that," cried Tom, "he's something like yourself; *I tell* you, Archer, if Tim ever dies of thirst, it must be where there is nothing wet, but water!"

"Now hark to the old scoundrel, Frank," said Archer, "hark to him pray, and if he doesn't out-eat both of us, and out-drink anything you ever saw, may I miss my first bird to-morrow—that's all! Give me a slice of beef, Frank; that old Goth would cut it an inch thick, if I let him touch it; out with a cork, Tom! Here's to our sport to-morrow!"

"Uh; that goes good!" replied Tom, with an oath, which, by the apparent gusto of the speaker, seemed to betoken that the wine had tickled his palate—"that goes good! that's different from the darned red trash you left up here last time."

"And of which you have *left* none, I'll be bound," answered Archer, laughing; "my best Latour, Frank, which the old infidel calls trash."

"It's all below, every bottle of it," answered Tom: "I wouldn't use such rot-gut stuff, no, not for vinegar. 'Taint half so good as that red sherry you had up here oncet; that was poor weak stuff, too, but it did well to make milk punch of; it did well instead of milk."

"Now, Frank," said Archer, "you won't believe me, *that I know*; but it's true, all the same. A year ago, this autumn, I

brought up five gallons of exceedingly stout, rather fiery, young, brown sherry—draught wine, you know!—and what did Tom do here, but mix it, half and half, with brandy, nutmeg, and sugar, and drink it for milk punch!"

"I did so, by the eternal," replied Tom, bolting a huge lump of beef, in order to enable himself to answer—"I did so, and good milk punch it made, too, but it was too weak! Come, Mr. Forester, we harn't dranked yet, and I'm kind o' gittin dry!"

And now the mirth waxed fast and furious—the champagne speedily was finished, the supper things cleared off, hot water and Starke's Ferintosh succeeded, cheroots were lighted, we drew closer in about the fire, and, during the circulation of two tumblers—for to this did Harry limit us, having the prospect of unsteady hands and aching heads before him for the morrow—never did I hear more genuine and real humor, than went round our merry trio.

Tom Draw, especially, though all his jokes were not such altogether as I can venture to insert in my chaste paragraphs, and though at times his oaths were too extravagantly rich to brook repetition, shone forth resplendent. No longer did I wonder at what I had before deemed Harry Archer's strange hallucination; Tom Draw is a decided genius—rough as a pine knot in his native woods—but full of mirth, of shrewdness, of keen mother wit, of hard horse sense, and last, not least, of the most genuine milk of human kindness. He is a rough block; but, as Harry says, there is solid timber under the uncouth bark enough to make five hundred men, as men go now-a-days *in cities!*

At ten o'clock, thanks to the excellent precautions of my friend Harry, we were all snugly berthed, before the whiskey, which had well justified the high praise I had heard lavished on it, had made any serious inroads on our understanding, but not before we had laid in a *quantum* to ensure a good night's rest.

Bright and early was I on foot the next day, but before I had half dressed myself I was assured, by the clatter of the breakfast things, that Archer had again stolen a march upon me; and the next moment my bed-room door, driven open by the thick boot of that worthy, gave me a full view of his person—arrayed in a stout fustian jacket—with half a dozen pockets in full view, and Heaven only knows how many more lying

perdu in the broad skirts. Knee-breeches of the same material, with laced half-boots and leather leggins, set off his stout calf and well turned ankle.

"Up! up! Frank," he exclaimed, "it is a morning of ten thousand; there has been quite a heavy dew, and by the time we are afoot it will be well evaporated; and then the scent will lie, I promise you! make haste, I tell you, breakfast is ready!"

Stimulated by his hurrying voice, I soon completed my toilet, and entering the parlor found Harry busily employed in stirring to and fro a pound of powder on one heated dinner plate, while a second was undergoing the process of preparation on the hearth-stone under a glowing pile of hickory ashes.

At the side-table, covered with guns, dog-whips, nipple-wrenches, and the like, Tim, rigged like his master, in half boots and leggins, but with a short roundabout of velveteen, in place of the full-skirted jacket, was filling our shot-pouches by aid of a capacious funnel, more used, as its odor betokened, to facilitate the passage of gin or Jamaica spirits than of so sober a material as cold lead.

At the same moment entered mine host, togged for the field in a huge pair of cow-hide boots, reaching almost to the knee, into the tops of which were tucked the lower ends of a pair of trowsers, containing yards enough of buffalo-cloth to have eked out the main-sail of a North River sloop; a waistcoat and single-breasted jacket of the same material, with a fur cap, completed his attire; but in his hand he bore a large decanter filled with a pale yellowish liquor, embalming a dense mass of fine and worm-like threads, not very different in appearance from the best vermicelli.

"Come, boys, come—here's your bitters," he exclaimed; and, as if to set the example, filled a big tumbler to the brim, gulped it down as if it had been water, smacked his lips, and incontinently tendered it to Archer, who, to my great amazement, filled himself likewise a more moderate draught, and quaffed it without hesitation.

"That's good, Tom," he said, pausing after the first sip; "that's the best I ever tasted here; how old's that?"

"Five years!" Tom replied: "five years last fall! Daddy Tom made it out of my own best apples—take a horn, Mr. Forester," he added, turning to me—"it's *first best* cider spirits—better a darned sight than that Scotch stuff you make

such an eternal fuss about, toting it up here every time, as if we'd nothing fit to drink in the country!"

And to my sorrow I did taste it—old apple whiskey, with Lord knows how much snake-root soaked in it for five years! They may talk about gall being bitter; but, by all that's wonderful, there was enough of the *amari aliquid* in this *fonte*, to me by no means of *leporum*, to have given an extra touch of bitterness to all the gall beneath the canopy; and with my mouth puckered up, till it was like anything on earth but a mouth, I set the glass down on the table; and for the next five minutes could do nothing but shake my head to and fro like a Chinese mandarin, amidst the loud and prolonged roars of laughter that burst like thunder claps from the huge jaws of Thomas Draw, and the subdued and half respectful cachinnations of Tim Matlock.

By the time I had got a little better, the black tea was ready, and with thick cream, hot buckwheat cakes, beautiful honey, and—as a stand by—the still venerable round, we made out a very tolerable meal.

This done, with due deliberation Archer supplied his several pockets with their accustomed load—the clean-punched wads in this—in that the Westley Richards' caps—here a pound horn of powder—there a shot-pouch on Syke's lever principle, with double mouth-piece—in another, screw-driver, nipple-wrench, and the spare cones; and, to make up the tale, dog-whip, dram-bottle, and silk handkerchief in the sixth and last.

"Nothing like method in this world," said Harry, clapping his low-crowned broad-brimmed mohair cap upon his head; "take my word for it. Now, Tim, what have you got in the bag?"

"A bottle of champagne, sur," answered Tim, who was now employed slinging a huge fustian game-bag, with a net-work front, over his right shoulder, to counterbalance two full shot-belts which were already thrown across the other—"a bottle of champagne, sur—a cold roast chicken—t' Cheshire cheese—and t' pilot biscuits. Is your dram-bottle filled wi' t' whiskey, please sur?"

"Aye, aye, Tim. Now let loose the dogs—carry a pair of couples and a leash along with you; and mind you, gentlemen, Tim carries shot for all hands; and luncheon—but each one finds his own powder, caps, &c.; and any one who wants a dram, carries his own—the devil a-one of you gets a sup out of

my bottle, or a charge out of my flask! That's right, old Trojan, isn't it?" with a good slap on Tom's broad shoulder.

"Shot! Shot—why Shot! don't you know me, old dog?" cried Tom, as the two setters bounded into the room, joyful at their release—"good dog! good Chase!" feeding them with great lumps of beef.

"Avast! there Tom—have done with that," cried Harry; "you'll have the dogs so full that they can't run."

"Why, how'd you like to hunt all day without your breakfast—hey?"

"Here, lads! here, lads! wh-e-ew!" and followed by his setters, with his gun under his arm, away went Harry; and catching up our pieces likewise, we followed, nothing loth, Tim bringing up the rear with the two spaniels fretting in their couples, and a huge black thorn cudgel, which he had brought, as he informed me, "all t' way from bonny Cawoods."

It was as beautiful a morning as ever lighted sportsmen to their labors. The dew, exhaled already from the long grass, still glittered here and there upon the shrubs and trees, though a soft fresh south-western breeze was shaking it thence momentarily in bright and rustling showers; the sun, but newly risen, and as yet partially enveloped in the thin gauze-like mists so frequent at that season, was casting shadows, seemingly endless, from every object that intercepted his low rays, and chequering the whole landscape with that play of light and shade, which is the loveliest accessory to a lovely scene; and lovely was the scene, indeed, as e'er was looked upon by painter's or by poet's eye—how then should humble prose do justice to it?

Seated upon the first slope of a gentle hill, midway of the great valley heretofore described, the village looked due south, toward the chains of mountains, which we had crossed on the preceding evening, and which in that direction bounded the landscape. These ridges, cultivated half-way up their swelling sides, which lay mapped out before our eyes in all the various beauty of orchards, yellow stubbles, and rich pastures dotted with sleek and comely cattle, were rendered yet more lovely and romantic, by here and there a woody gorge, or rocky chasm, channelling their smooth flanks, and carrying down their tributary rills, to swell the main stream at their base. Toward these we took our way by the same road which we had followed in an opposite direction on the previous night—but for a short

space only—for having crossed the stream, by the same bridge which we had passed on entering the village, Tom Draw pulled down a set of bars to the left, and strode out manfully into the stubble.

“Hold up, good lads!—whe-ew—whewt!” and away went the setters through the moist stubble, heads up and sterns down, like fox-hounds on a breast-high scent, yet under the most perfect discipline; for at the very first note of Harry’s whistle, even when racing at the top of their pace, they would turn simultaneously, alter their course, cross each other at right angles, and quarter the whole field, leaving no foot of ground unbeaten.

No game, however, in this instance, rewarded their exertions; and on we went across a meadow, and two other stubbles, with the like result. But now we crossed a gentle hill, and, at its base, came on a level tract, containing at the most ten acres of marsh land, overgrown with high coarse grass and flags. Beyond this, on the right, was a steep rocky hillock, covered with tall and thrifty timber of some thirty years’ growth, but wholly free from underwood. Along the left-hand fence ran a thick belt of underwood, sumach and birch, with a few young oak trees interspersed; but in the middle of the swampy level, covering at most some five or six acres, was a dense circular thicket composed of every sort of thorny bush and shrub, matted with cat-briers and wild vines, and overshadowed by a clump of tall and leafy ashes, which had not as yet lost one atom of their foliage, although the underwood beneath them was quite sere and leafless.

“Now then,” cried Harry, “this is the ‘Squire’s swamp-hole!’ Now for a dozen cock! hey, Tom? Here, couple up the setters, Tim; and let the spaniels loose. Now Flash! now Dan! down charge, you little villains!” and the well broke brutes dropped on the instant. “How must we beat this cursed hole?”

“You must go through the very thick of it, conçarn you!” exclaimed Tom; “at your old work already, hey? trying t shirk at first!”

“Don’t swear so! you old reprobate! I know my place, depend on it,” cried Archer; “but what to do with the rest of you!—there’s the rub!”

“Not a bit of it,” cried Tom—“here, Yorkshire—Ducklegs—here, what’s your name—get away you with those big dogs—atwixt the swamp hole, and the brush there by the fence, and

look out that you mark every bird to an inch! You, Mr. Forester, go in there, under that butter-nut; you'll find a blind track there, right through the brush—keep that 'twixt Tim and Mr. Archer; and keep your eyes skinned, do! there'll be a cock up before you're ten yards in. Archer, you'll go right through, and I'll——”

“You'll keep well forward on the right—and mind that no bird crosses to the hill; we never get them, if they once get over. All right! In with you now! Steady, Flash! steady! hie up, Dan!” and in a moment Harry was out of sight among the brush-wood, though his progress might be traced by the continual crackling of the thick underwood.

Scarce had I passed the butter-nut, when, even as Tom had said, up flapped a woodcock scarcely ten yards before me, in the open path, and rising heavily to clear the branches of a tall thorn bush, showed me his full black eye, and tawny breast, as fair a shot as could be fancied.

“Mark!” hollaed Harry to my right, his quick ear having caught the flap of the bird's wing, as he rose. “Mark cock—Frank!”

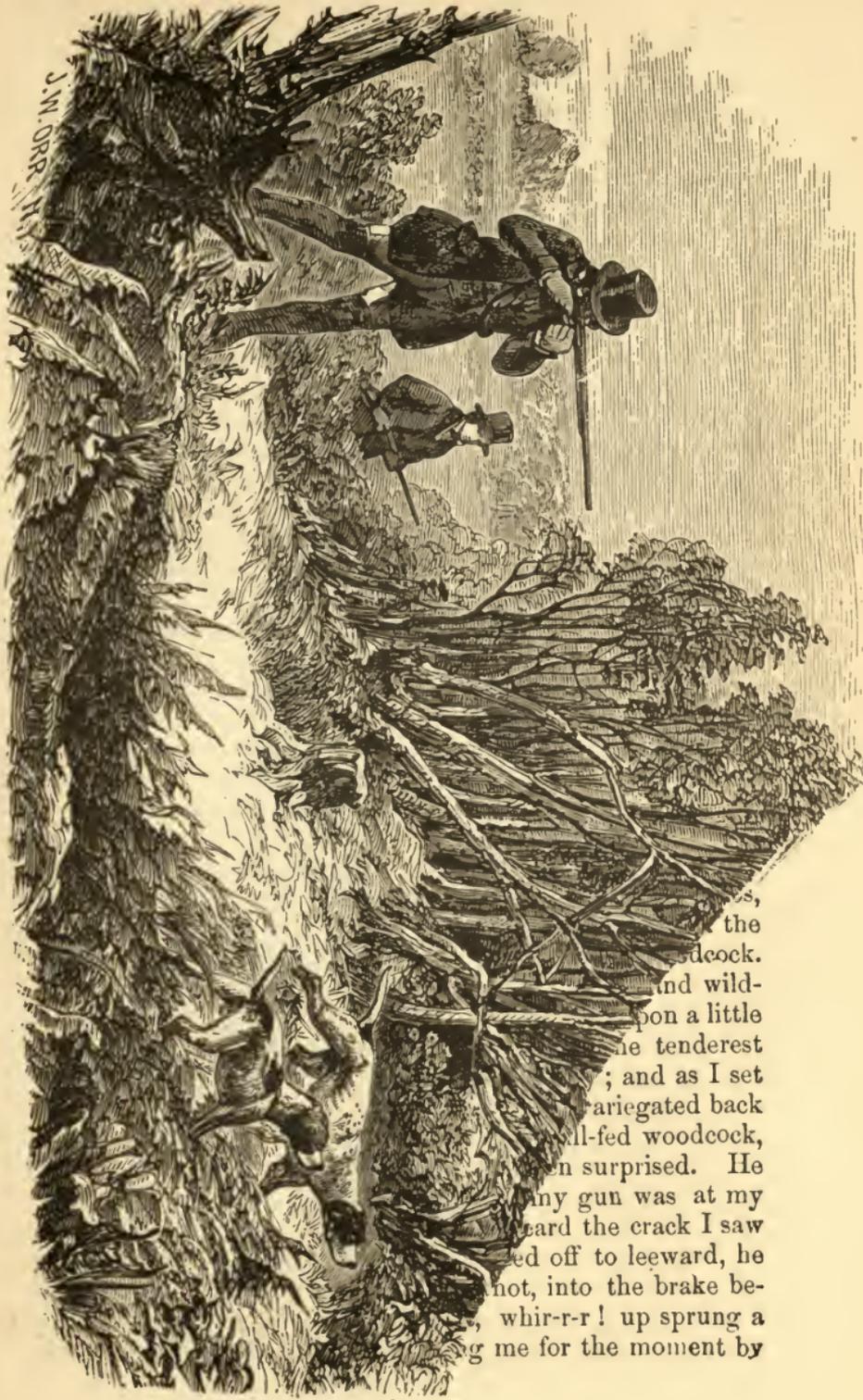
Well—steadily enough, as I thought, I pitched my gun up! covered my bird fairly! pulled!—the trigger gave not to my finger. I tried the other. Devil's in it, I had forgot to cock my gun! and ere I could retrieve my error, the bird had topped the bush, and dodged out of sight, and off—“Mark! mark!—Tim!” I shouted.

“Ey! ey! sur—Ay see's um!”

“Why, how's that, Frank?” cried Harry. “Couldn't you get a shot?”

“Forgot to cock my gun!” I cried; but at the self-same moment the quick sharp yelping of the spaniels came on my ear. “Steady, Flash! steady, sir! Mark!” But close upon the word came the full round report of Harry's gun. “Mark! again!” shouted Harry, and again his own piece sent its loud ringing voice abroad. “Mark! now a third! mark, Frank!”

And as he spoke I caught the quick rush of his wing, and saw him dart across a space, a few yards to my right. I felt my hand shake; I had not pulled a trigger in ten months, but in a second's space I rallied. There was an opening just before me between a stumpy thick thorn-bush which had saved the last bird, and a dwarf cedar; it was not two yards over; he glanced across it;



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"Beautiful!" shouted Harry, who, looking through a cross glade, saw the bird fall, which I could not. "Beautiful shot, Frank! Do all your work like that, and we'll get twenty couple before night!"

"Have I killed him!" answered I, half doubting if he were not quizzing me.

"Killed him? of course you have; doubled him up completely! But look sharp! there are more birds before me! I can hardly keep the dogs down, now! There! there goes one—clean out of shot of me, though! Mark! mark, Tom! Gad, how the fat dog's running!" he continued. "He sees him! Ten to one he gets him! There he goes—bang! A long shot, and killed clean!"

"Ready!" cried I. "I'm ready, Archer!"

"Bag your bird, then. He lies under that dock leaf, at the foot of yon red maple! That's it; you've got him. Steady now, till Tom gets loaded!"

"What did you do?" asked I. "You fired twice, I think!"

"Killed two!" he answered. "Ready, now!" and on he went, smashing away the boughs before him, while ever and anon I heard his cheery voice, calling or whistling to his dogs, or rousing up the tenants of some thickets into which even he could not force his way; and I, creeping, as best I might, among the tangled brush, now plunging half thigh deep in holes full of tenacious mire, now blundering over the moss-covered stubs, pressed forward, fancying every instant that the rustling of the briars against my jacket was the flip-flap of a rising woodcock. Suddenly, after bursting through a mass of thorns and wild-vine, which was in truth almost impassable, I came upon a little grassy spot quite clear of trees, and covered with the tenderest verdure, through which a narrow rill stole silently; and as I set my first foot on it, up jumped, with his beautiful variegated back all reddened by the sunbeams, a fine and full-fed woodcock, with the peculiar twitter which he utters when surprised. He had not gone ten yards, however, before my gun was at my shoulder and the trigger drawn; before I heard the crack I saw him cringe; and, as the white smoke drifted off to leeward, he fell heavily, completely riddled by the shot, into the brake before me; while at the same moment, whir-r-r! up sprung a bevy of twenty quail, at least, startling me for the moment by

the thick whirring of their wings, and skirring over the under-wood right toward Archer. "Mark, quail!" I shouted, and, recovering instantly my nerves, fired my one remaining barrel after the last bird! It was a long shot, yet I struck him fairly, and he rose instantly right upward, towering high! high! into the clear blue sky, and soaring still, till his life left him in the air, and he fell like a stone, plump downward!

"Mark him! Tim!"

"Ey! ey! sur. He's a de-ad un, that's a sure thing!"

At my shot all the bevy rose a little, yet altered not their course the least, wheeling across the thicket directly round the front of Archer, whose whereabouts I knew, though I could neither see nor hear him. So high did they fly that I could observe them clearly, every bird well defined against the sunny heavens. I watched them eagerly. Suddenly one turned over; a cloud of feathers streamed off down the wind; and then, before the sound of the first shot had reached my ears, a second pitched a few yards upward, and, after a heavy flutter, followed its hapless comrade.

Turned by the fall of the two leading birds, the bevy again wheeled, still rising higher, and now flying very fast; so that, as I saw by the direction which they took, they would probably give Draw a chance of getting in both barrels. And so indeed it was; for, as before, long ere I caught the booming echoes of his heavy gun, I saw two birds keeled over, and, almost at the same instant, the cheery shout of Tim announced to me that he had bagged my towered bird! After a little pause, again we started, and, hailing one another now and then, gradually forced our way through brake and brier toward the outward verge of the dense covert. Before we met again, however, I had the luck to pick up a third woodcock, and as I heard another double shot from Archer, and two single bangs from Draw, I judged that my companions had not been less successful than myself. At last, emerging from the thicket, we all converged, as to a common point, toward Tim; who, with his game-bag on the ground, with its capacious mouth wide open to receive our game, sat on a stump with the two setters at a charge beside him.

"What do we score?" cried I, as we drew near; "what do we score?"

"I have four woodcocks, and a brace of quail," said Harry.

"And I, two cock and a brace," cried Tom, "and missed an-

other cock ; but he's down in the meadow here, behind that 'ere stump alder !"

" And I, three woodcock and one quail !" I chimed in, naught abashed.

" And Ay'se marked doon three woodcock—two more beside yon big un, that measter Draa made siccan a bungle of—and all t' quail—every feather on um—doon i' t' bog meadow yonner—ooh ! but we'se mak grand sport o't !" interposed Tim, now busily employed stringing bird after bird up by the head, with loops and buttons in the game-bag !

" Well done then, all !" said Harry. " Nine timber-doodles and five quail, and only one shot missed ! That's not bad shooting, considering what a hole it is to shoot in. Gentlemen, here's your health," and filling himself out a fair sized wine-glass-full of Ferintosh, into the silver cup of his dram-bottle, he tossed it off ; and then poured out a similar libation for Tim Matlock. Tom and myself, nothing loth, obeyed the hint, and sipped our modicums of distilled waters out of our private flasks.

" Now, then," cried Archer, " let us pick up these scattering birds. Tom Draw, you can get yours without a dog ! And now, Tim, where are yours ?"

" T' first lies oop yonner in yon boonch of brachens, ahint t' big scarlet maple ; and t' other—"

" Well ! I'll go to the first. You take Mr. Forester to the other, and when we have bagged all three, we'll meet at the bog meadow fence, and then hie at the bevy !"

This job was soon done, for Draw and Harry bagged their birds cleverly at the first rise ; and although mine got off at first without a shot, by dodging round a birch tree straight in Tim's face, and flew back slap toward the thicket, yet he pitched in its outer skirt, and as he jumped up wild I cut him down with a broken pinion and a shot through his bill at fifty yards, and Chase retrieved him well.

" Cleverly stopped, indeed !" Frank halloaed ; " and by no means an easy shot ! and so our work's clean done for this place, at the least !"

" The boy *can* shoot *some*," observed Tom Draw, who loved to bother Timothy ; " the boy *can* shoot *some*, though he *doos* come from Yorkshire !"

" Gad ! and Ay wush Ay'd no but gotten thee i' Yorkshire, measter Draa !" responded Tim.

“Why! what if you had got me there?”

“What? Whoy, Ay’d clap thee iv a cage, and hug thee round t’ feasts and fairs loike; and shew thee to t’ folks at so mooch a head. Ay’s sure Ay’d mak a fortune o’ t’!”

“He has you there, Tom! Ha! ha! ha!” laughed Archer. “Tim ’s down upon you there, by George! Now, Frank, do fancy Tom Draw in a cage at Borough-bridge or Catterick fair! Lord! how the folks would pay to look at him! Fancy the sign board too! The Great American Man-Mammoth! Ha! ha! ha! But come, we must not stay here talking nonsense, or we shall do no good. Show me, Tim, where are the quail!”

“Doon i’ t’ bog meadow yonner! joost i’ t’ slack,* see thee, there!” pointing with the stout black-thorn; “among yon bits o’ bushes!”

“Very well—that ’s it; now let go the setters; take Flash and Dan along with you, and cut across the country as straight as you can go to the spring head, where we lunched last year; that day, you know, Tom, when McTavish frightened the bull out of the meadow, under the pin-oak tree. Well! put the champagne into the spring to cool, and rest yourself there till we come; we shan’t be long behind you.”

Away went Tim, stopping from time to time to mark our progress, and over the fence into the bog meadow we proceeded; a rascally piece of broken tussocky ground, with black mud knee-deep between the hags, all covered with long grass. The third step I took, over I went upon my nose, but luckily avoided shoving my gun-barrels into the filthy mire.

“Steady, Frank, steady! I’m ashamed of you!” said Harry; “so hot and so impetuous; and your gun too at the full cock; that ’s the reason, man, why you missed firing at your first bird, this morning. I never cock either barrel till I see my bird; and, if a bevy rises, only one at a time. The birds will lie like stones here; and we cannot walk too slow. Steady, Shot, have a care, sir!”

Never, in all my life, did I see any thing more perfect than the style in which the setters drew those bogs. There was no more of racing, no more of impetuous dash; it seemed as if they knew the birds were close before them. At a slow trot, their sterns whipping their flanks at every step, they threaded

* Slack—Yorkshire. Anglice, *Moist hollow*.

the high tussocks. See! the red dog straightens his neck, and snuffs the air.

“Look to! look to, Frank! they are close before old Chase!”

Now he draws on again, crouching close to the earth. “Toho! Shot!” Now he stands! no! no! not yet—at least he is not certain! He turns his head to catch his master’s eye! Now his stern moves a little; he draws on again.

There! he is sure now! what a picture—his black full eye intently glaring, though he cannot see any thing in that thick mass of herbage; his nostril wide expanded, his lips slavering from intense excitement; his whole form motionless, and sharply drawn, and rigid, even to the straight stern and lifted foot, as a block wrought to mimic life by some skilful sculptor’s chisel; and, scarce ten yards behind, his liver-colored comrade backs him—as firm, as stationary, as immovable, but in his attitude, how different! Chase feels the hot scent steaming up under his very nostril; feels it in every nerve, and quivers with anxiety to dash on his prey, even while perfectly restrained and steady. Shot, on the contrary, though a few minutes since he too was drawing, knows nothing of himself, perceives no indication of the game’s near presence, although improved by discipline, his instinct tells him that his mate has found them. Hence the same rigid form, stiff tail, and constrained attitude, but in his face—for dogs *have* faces—there is none of that tense energy, that evident anxiety; there is no frown upon his brow, no glare in his mild open eye, no slaver on his lip!

“Come up, Tom; come up, Frank, they are all here; we must get in six barrels; they will not move: come up, I say!”

And on we came, deliberately prompt, and ready. Now we were all in line: Harry the centre man, I on the right, and Tom on the left hand. The attitude of Archer was superb; his legs, set a little way apart, as firm as if they had been rooted in the soil; his form drawn back a little, and his head erect, with his eye fixed upon the dogs; his gun held in both hands, across his person, the muzzle slightly elevated, his left grasping the trigger guard; the thumb of the right resting upon the hammer, and the fore-finger on the trigger of the left hand barrel; but, as he had said, neither cocked. “Fall back, Tom, if you please, five yards or so,” he said, as coolly as if he were unconcerned, “and you come forward, Frank, as many; I want to drive them to the left, into those low red bushes; that will do: now then, I’ll flush them; never mind me, boys, I’ll reserve my fire.”

And, as he spoke, he moved a yard or two in front of us, and under his very feet, positively startling me by their noisy flutter, up sprang the gallant bevy: fifteen or sixteen well grown birds, crowding and jostling one against the other. Tom Draw's gun, as I well believe, was at his shoulder when they rose; at least his first shot was discharged before they had flown half a rood, and of course harmlessly: the charge must have been driven through them like a single ball; his second barrel instantly succeeded, and down came two birds, caught in the act of crossing. I am myself a quick shot, *too* quick if anything, yet my first barrel was exploded a moment after Tom Draw's second; the other followed, and I had the satisfaction of bringing both my birds down handsomely; then up went Harry's piece—the bevy being now twenty or twenty-five yards distant—cocking it as it rose, he pulled the trigger almost before it touched his shoulder, so rapid was the movement; and, though he lowered the stock a little to cock the second barrel, a moment scarcely passed between the two reports, and almost on the instant two quail were fluttering out their lives among the bog grass.

Dropping his butt, without a word, or even a glance to the dogs, he quietly went on to load; nor indeed was it needed: at the first shot they dropped into the grass, and there they lay as motionless as if they had been dead, with their heads crouched between their paws; nor did they stir thence till the tick of the gun-locks announced that we again were ready. Then lifting up their heads, and rising on their fore-feet, they sat half erect, eagerly waiting for the signal.

“Hold up, good lads!” and on they drew, and in an instant pointed on two several birds. “Fetch!” and each brought his burthen to our feet; six birds were bagged at that rise, and thus before eleven o'clock we had picked up a dozen cock, and within one of the same number of fine quail, with only two shots missed. The poor remainder of the bevy had dropped, singly, and scattered, in the red bushes, whither we instantly pursued them, and where we got six more, making a total of seventeen birds bagged out of a bevy, twenty strong at first.

One towered bird of Harry's, certainly killed dead, we could not with all our efforts bring to bag; one bird Tom Draw missed clean, and the remaining one we could not find again; another dram of whiskey, and into Seer's great swamp we started: a large piece of woodland, with every kind of lying. At one end

it was open, with soft black loamy soil, covered with docks and colts-foot leaves under the shade of large but leafless willows, and here we picked up a good many scattered woodcock; afterward we got into the heavy thicket with much tangled grass, wherein we flushed a bevy, but they all took to tree, and we made very little of them; and here Tom Draw began to low and labor; the covert was too thick, the bottom too deep and unsteady for him.

Archer perceiving this, sent him at once to the outside; and three times, as we went along, ourselves moving nothing, we heard the round reports of his large calibre. "A bird at every shot, I'd stake my life," said Harry, "he never misses cross shots in the open:" at the same instant, a tremendous rush of wings burst from the heaviest thicket: "Mark! partridge! partridge!" and as I caught a glimpse of a dozen large birds fluttering up, one close upon the other, and darting away as straight and nearly as fast as bullets, through the dense branches of a cedar brake, I saw the flashes of both Harry's barrels, almost simultaneously discharged, and at the same time over went the objects of his aim; but ere I could get up my gun the rest were out of sight. "You must shoot, Frank, like lightning, to kill these beggars; they are the ruffed grouse, though they call them partridge here: see! are they not fine fellows?"

Another hour's beating, in which we still kept picking up, from time to time, some scattering birds, brought us to the spring head, where we found Tim with luncheon ready, and our fat friend reposing at his side, with two more grouse, and a rabbit which he had bagged along the covert's edge. Cool was the Star champagne; and capital was the cold fowl and Cheshire cheese; and most delicious was the repose that followed, enlivened with gay wit and free good humor, soothed by the fragrance of the exquisite cheroots, moistened by the last drops of the Ferintosh qualified by the crystal waters of the spring. After an hour's rest, we counted up our spoil; four ruffed grouse, nineteen woodcocks, with ten brace and a half of quail beside the bunny, made up our score—done comfortably in four hours.

"Now we have finished for to-day with quail," said Archer, "but we'll get full ten couple more of woodcock; come, let us be stirring; hang up your game-bag in the tree, and tie the setters to the fence; I want you in with me to beat, Tim; you

two chaps must both keep the outside—you all the time, Tom ; you, Frank, till you get to that tall thunder-shivered ash tree ; turn in there, and follow up the margin of a wide slank you will see ; but be careful, the mud is very deep, and dangerous in places ; now then, here goes !”

And in he went, jumping a narrow streamlet into a point of thicket, through which he drove by main force. Scarce had he got six yards into the brake, before both spaniels quested ; and, to my no small wonder, the jungle seemed alive with woodcock ; eight or nine, at the least, flapped up at once, and skimmed along the tongue of coppice toward the high wood, which ran along the valley, as I learned afterward, for full three miles in length—while four or five more wheeled off to the sides, giving myself and Draw fair shots, by which we did not fail to profit ; but I confess it was with absolute astonishment that I saw two of those turned over, which flew inward, killed by the marvellously quick and unerring aim of Archer, where a less thorough sportsman would have been quite unable to discharge a gun at all, so dense was the tangled jungle. Throughout the whole length of that skirt of coppice, a hundred and fifty yards, I should suppose at the utmost, the birds kept rising as it were incessantly—thirty-five, or, I think, nearly forty, being flushed in less than twenty minutes, although comparatively few were killed, partly from the difficulty of the ground, and partly from their getting up by fours and fives at once. Into the high wood, however, at the last we drove them ; and there, till daylight failed us, we did our work like men. By the cold light of the full moon we wended homeward, rejoicing in the possession of twenty-six couple and a half of cock, twelve brace of quail—we found another bevy on our way home and bagged three birds almost by moonlight—five ruffed grouse, and a rabbit. Before our wet clothes were well changed, supper was ready, and a good blow-out was followed by sound slumbers and sweet dreams, fairly earned by nine hours of incessant walking.

DAY THE THIRD.

So thoroughly was I tired out by the effects of the first day's fagging I had undergone in many months, and so sound was the slumber into which I sank the moment my head touched the pillow, that it scarcely seemed as if five minutes had elapsed between my falling into sweet forgetfulness, and my starting bolt upright in bed, aroused by the vociferous shout, and ponderous tramping, equal to nothing less than that of a full-grown rhinoceros, with which Tom Draw rushed, long before the sun was up, into my chamber.

"What's this, what's this now?" he exclaimed; "why the plague arn't you up and ready?—why here's the bitters mixed, and Archer in the stable this half hour past, and Jem's here with the hounds—and you, you lazy snorting Injun, wasting the morning here in bed!"

My only reply to this most characteristic salutation, was to hurl my pillow slap in his face, and—threatening to follow up the missile with the contents of the water pitcher, which stood temptingly within my reach, if he did not get out incontinently—to jump up and array myself with all due speed; for, when I had collected my bewildered thoughts, I well remembered that we had settled on a fox-hunt before breakfast, as a preliminary to a fresh skirmish with the quail.

In a few minutes I was on foot and in the parlor, where I found a bright crackling fire, a mighty pitcher of milk punch, and a plate of biscuit, an apt substitute for breakfast before starting; while, however, I was discussing these, Archer arrived, dressed just as I have described him on the preceding day, with the addition of a pair of heavy hunting spurs, buckled on over his half-boots, and a large iron-hammered whip in his right hand.

"That's right, Frank," he exclaimed, after the ordinary salutations of the morning.

"Why that old porpoise told me you would not be ready these two hours; he's grumbling out yonder by the stable door, like a hog stuck in a farm-yard gate. But come, we may as well be moving, for the hounds are all uncoupled, and the nags saddled—put on a pair of straps to your fustian trowsers and take these racing spurs, though Peacock does not want them—and now, hurrah!"

This was soon done, and going out upon the stoop, a scene—it is true, widely different from the kennel door at Melton, or the covert side at Billesdon Coplow, yet not by any means devoid of interest or animation—presented itself to my eyes. About six couple of large heavy hounds, with deep and pendant ears, heavy well-feathered sterns, broad chests, and muscular strong limbs, were gathered round their feeder, the renowned Jem Lyn; on whom it may not be impertinent to waste a word or two, before proceeding to the mountain, which, as I learned, to my no little wonder, was destined to be our hunting ground.

Picture to yourself, then, gentle reader, a small but actively formed man, with a face of most unusual and portentous ugliness, an uncouth grin doing the part of a smile; a pair of eyes so small that they would have been invisible, but for the serpent-like vivacity and brightness with which they sparkled from their deep sockets, and a profusion of long hair, coal-black, but lank and uncurled as an Indian's, combed smoothly down with a degree of care entirely out of keeping with the other details, whether of dress or countenance, on either cheek. Above these sleek and cherished tresses he wore a thing which might have passed for either cap or castor, at the wearer's pleasure; for it was wholly destitute of brim except for a space some three or four inches wide over the eyebrows; and the crown had been so pertinaciously and completely beaten in, that the sides sloped inward at the top, as if to personate a bishop's mitre; a fishing line was wound about this graceful and, if its appearance belied it not most foully, odoriferous head-dress; and into the fishing line was stuck the bowl and some two inches of the shank of a well-sooted pipe. An old red handkerchief was twisted rope-wise about his lean and scraggy neck, but it by no means sufficed to hide the scar of what had evidently been a most appalling gash, extending right across his throat, almost from ear to ear, the great cicatrix clearly visible like a white line through the thick stubble of some ten days' standing that graced his chin and neck.

An old green coat, the skirts of which had long since been docked by the encroachment of thorn-bushes and cat-briers, with the mouth-piece of a powder-horn peeping from its breast pocket, and a full shot-belt crossing his right shoulder; a pair of fustian trowsers, patched at the knees with corduroy, and heavy cowhide boots completed his attire. This, as it seemed, was to be our huntsman; and sooth to say, although he did

not look the character, he played the part, when he got to work, right handsomely. At a more fitting season, Harry in a few words let me into this worthy's history and disposition. "He is," he said, "the most incorrigible rascal I ever met with—an unredeemed and utter vagabond; he started life as a stallion-leader, a business which he understands—as in fact he does almost every thing else within his scope—thoroughly well. He got on prodigiously!—was employed by the first breeders in the country!—took to drinking, and then, in due rotation, to gambling, pilfering, lying, every vice, in short, which is compatible with utter want of any thing like moral sense, deep shrewdness, and uncommon cowardice.

"He cut his throat once—you may see the scar now—in a fit of *delirium tremens*, and Tom Draw, who, though he is perpetually cursing him for the most lying critter under heaven, has, I believe, a sort of fellow feeling for him—nursed him and got him well; and ever since he has hung about here, getting at times a country stallion to look after, at others hunting, or fishing, or doing little jobs about the stable, for which Tom gives him plenty of abuse, plenty to eat, and as little rum as possible, for if he gets a second glass it is all up with Jem Lyn for a week at least.

"He came to see me once in New York, when I was down upon my back with a broken leg—I was lying in the parlor, about three weeks after the accident had happened. Tim Matlock had gone out for something, and the cook let him in; and, after he had sat there about half an hour, telling me all the news of the races, and making me laugh more than was good for my broken leg, he gave me such a hint, that I was compelled to direct him to the cupboard, wherein I kept the liquor-stand; and unluckily enough, as I had not for some time been in drinking tune, all three of the bottles were brimful; and, as I am a Christian man, he drank in spite of all I could say—I could not leave the couch to get at him—two of them to the dregs; and, after frightening me almost to death, fell flat upon the floor, and lay there fast asleep when Tim came in again. He dragged him instantly, by my directions, under the pump in the garden, and soused him for about two hours, but without producing the least effect, except eliciting a grunt or two from this most seasoned cask.

"Such is Jem Lyn, and yet, absurd to say, I have tried the fellow, and believe him perfectly trustworthy—at least to me!

“He is a coward, yet I have seen him fight like a hero more than once, and against heavy odds, to save me from a threshing, which I got after all, though not without some damage to our foes, whose name might have been legion.

“He is the greatest liar I ever met with; and yet I never caught him in a falsehood, for he believes it is no use to tell me one.

“He is most utterly dishonest, yet I have trusted him with sums that would, in his opinion, have made him a rich man for life, and he accounted to the utmost shilling; but I advise you not to try the same, for if you do he most assuredly will cheat you!”

Among the heavy looking hounds, which clustered round this hopeful gentleman, I quickly singled out two couple of widely different breed and character from the rest; your thorough high-bred racing fox-hounds, with ears rounded, thin shining coats, clean limbs, and all the marks of the best class of English hounds.

“Aye! Frank,” said Archer, as he caught my eye fixed on them, “you have found out my favorites. Why, Bonny Belle, good lass, why Bonny Belle!—here Blossom, Blossom, come up and show your pretty figures to your countryman! Poor Hanbury—do you remember, Frank, how many a merry day we’ve had with him by Thorley Church, and Takely forest?—poor Hanbury sent them to me with *such* a letter, only the year before he died; and those, Dauntless and Dangerous, I had from Will, Lord Harewood’s huntsman, the same season!”

“There never was sich dogs—there never was afore in Orange,” said Tom. “I *will* say that, though they be English; and though they be too fast for fox, entirely, there never was sich dogs for deer”—

“But how the deuce,” I interrupted, “can hounds be too fast, if they have bone and stanchness!”

“Stanchness be darned; they holes them!”

“No earthstoppers in these parts, Frank,” cried Harry; “and as the object of these gentlemen is not to hunt solely for the fun of the thing, but to destroy a noxious varmint, they prefer a slow, sure, deep-mouthed dog, that does not press too closely on Pug, but lets him take his time about the coverts, till he comes into fair gunshot of these hunters, who are lying perdu as he runs to get a crack at him.”

“And pray,” said I, “is this *your* method of proceeding?”



MOUNTED FOR THE HUNT.—Page 39.

“The Warwick Woodlands.”



“You shall see, you shall see; come get to horse, or it will be late before we get our breakfast, and I assure you I don’t wish to lose either that, or my days’s quail-shooting. This hunt is merely for a change, and to get something of an appetite for breakfast. Now, Tim, be sure that every thing is ready by eight o’clock at the latest—we shall be in by that time with a furious appetite.”

Thus saying he mounted, without more delay, his favorite, the gray; while I backed, nothing loth, the chestnut horse; and at the same time to my vast astonishment, from under the long shed out rode the mighty Tom, bestriding a tall powerful brown mare, showing a monstrous deal of blood combined with no slight bone—equipped with a cavalry bridle, and strange to say, *without* the universal martingal; he was rigged just as usual, with the exception of a broad-brimmed hat in place of his fur cap, and grasped in his right hand a heavy smooth-bored rifle, while with the left he wheeled his mare, with a degree of active skill, which I should certainly have looked for any where rather than in so vast a mass of flesh as that which was exhibited by our worthy host.

Two other sportsmen, grave, sober-looking farmers, whom Harry greeted cheerily by name, and to whom in all due form I was next introduced, well-mounted, and armed with long single-barrelled guns, completed our party; and away we went at a rattling trot, the hounds following at Archer’s heels, as steadily as though he hunted them three times a week.

“Now arn’t it a strange thing,” said Tom, “arn’t it a strange thing, Mr. Forester, that every critter under Heaven takes somehow nat’rally to that are Archer—the very hounds—old Whino there! that I have had these eight years, and fed with my own hands, and hunted steady every winter, quits me the very moment he claps sight on him; by the eternal, I believe he is half dog himself.”

“You *hunted* them indeed,” interrupted Harry, “you old rhinoceros, why hang your hide, you never so much as heard a good view-holloa till I came up here—you *hunted* them—a man talk of hunting, that carries a cannon about with him on horseback; but come, where are we to try first, on Rocky Hill, or in the Spring Swamps?”

“Why now I reckon, Archer, we’d best stop down to Sam Blain’s—by the blacksmith’s—he was telling t’other morning of an eternal sight of them he’d seen down hereaway—and we’ll

be there to rights!—Jem, cuss you, out of my way, you dumb nigger—out of my way, or I'll ride over you"—for, travelling along at a strange shambling run, that worthy had contrived to keep up with us, though we were going fully at the rate of eight or nine miles in the hour.

"Hurrah!" cried Tom, suddenly pulling up at the door of a neat farm-house on the brow of a hill, with a clear streamlet sweeping round its base, and a fine piece of woodland at the farther side. "Hurrah! Sam Blain, we've come to make them foxes, you were telling of a Sunday, smell h—ll right straight away. Here's Archer, and another Yorker with him—leastwise an Englisher I should say—and Squire Conklin, and Bill Speers, and that white nigger Jem! Look sharp, I say! Look sharp, cuss you, else we'll pull off the ruff of the old humstead."

In a few minutes Sam made his appearance, armed, like the rest, with a Queen Ann's tower-musket.

"Well! well!" he said, "I'm ready. Quit making such a clatter! Lend me a load of powder, one of you; my horn's leaked dry, I reckon!"

Tom forthwith handed him his own, and the next thing I heard was Blain exclaiming that it was "desperate pretty powder," and wondered if it shot strong.

"Shoot strong? I guess you'll find it strong enough to sew you up, if you go charging your old musket that ways!" answered Tom. "By the Lord, Archer, he's put in three full charges!"

"Well, it will kill him, that's all!" answered Harry, very coolly; "and there'll be one less of you. But come! come! let's be bustling; the sun's going to get up already. You'll leave your horses here, I suppose, gentlemen, and get to the old stands. Tom Draw, put Mr. Forester at my old post down by the big pin-oak at the creek side; and you stand there, Frank, still as a church-mouse. It's ten to one, if some of those fellows don't shoot him first, that he'll break covert close by you, and run the meadows for a mile or two, up to the turnpike road, and over it to Rocky hill—that black knob yonder, covered with pine and hemlock. There are some queer snake fences in the flat, and a big brook or two, but Peacock has been over every inch of it before, and you may trust in him implicitly. Good bye! I'm going up the road with Jem to drive it from the upper end."

And off he went at a merry trot, with the hounds gamboling about his stirrups, and Jem Lyn running at his best pace to keep

up with him. In a few minutes they were lost behind a swell of woodland, round which the road wheeled suddenly. At the same moment Tom and his companions re-appeared from the stables, where they had been securing their four-footed friends ; and, after a few seconds, spent in running ramrods down the barrels to see that all was right, inspecting primings, knapping flints, or putting on fresh copper caps, it was announced that all was ready ; and passing through the farm-yard, we entered, through a set of bars, a broad bright buckwheat stubble. Scarcely an hundred yards had we proceeded, before we sprung the finest bevy of the largest quail I had yet seen, and flying high and wild crossed half-a-dozen fields in the direction of the village, whence we had started, and pitched at length into an alder brake beside the stream.

“Them chaps has gone the right way,” Tom exclaimed, with a deep sigh, who had with wondrous difficulty refrained from firing into them, though he was loaded with buckshot ; “right in the course we count to take this forenoon. Now, Squire, keep to the left *here*, take your station by the old earths there away, under the tall dead pine ; and you, Bill, make tracks *there*, straight through the middle cart-way, down to the other meadow, and sit you down right where the two streams fork ; there’ll be an old red snooping down that side afore long, I reckon. We’ll go on, Mr. Forester ; here’s a big rail fence now ; I’ll throw off the top rail, for I’ll be darned if I climb any day when I can creep—there, that’ll do, I reckon ; leastwise if you can ride like Archer—he d—ns me always if I so much as shakes a fence afore he jumps it—you’ve got the best horse, too, for lepping. Now let’s see ! Well done ! well done !” he continued, with a most boisterous burst of laughter—“well done, *horse*, any how !”—as Peacock, who had been chafing ever since he parted from his comrade Bob, went at the fence as though he were about to take it in his stroke — stopped short when within a yard of it, and then bucked over it, without touching a splinter, although it was at least five feet, and shaking me so much, that, greatly to Tom’s joy, I showed no little glimpse of day-light.

“I reckon if they *run* the meadows, you’ll hardly *ride* them, Forester,” he grinned ; “but now away with you. You see the tall dark pin oak, it hasn’t lost one leaf yet ; right in the nook there of the bars you’ll find a quiet shady spot, where you can see clear up the rail fence to this knob, where I’ll be. Off with you, boy—and mind you now, you keep as dumb as the old wo-

man when her husband cut her tongue out, 'cause she had too much jaw."

Finishing his discourse, he squatted himself down on the stool of a large hemlock, which, being recently cut down, cumbered the woodside with its giant stem, and secured him, with its ever-green top now lowly laid and withering, from the most narrow scrutiny; while I, giving the gallant horse his head, went at a brisk hand-gallop across the firm short turf of the fair sloping hill-side, taking a moderate fence in my stroke, which Peacock cleared in a style that satisfied me Harry had by no means exaggerated his capacity to act as hunter, in lieu of the less glorious occupation, to which in general he was doomed.

In half a minute more I reached my post, and though an hour passed before I heard the slightest sound betokening the chase, never did I more thoroughly enjoy an hour.

The loveliness of the whole scene before me—the broad rich sweep of meadowland lying, all bathed in dew, under the pale gray light of an autumnal morning, with groups of cattle couched still between the trees where they had passed the night; the distant hills, veiled partially in mist, partially rearing their round leafy heads toward the brightening sky; and then the various changes of the landscape, as slowly the day broke behind the eastern hill; and all the various sounds of bird, and beast, and insect, which each succeeding variation of the morning served to call into life as if by magic. First a faint rosy flush stole up the eastern sky, and nearly at the self-same moment, two or three vagrant crows came flapping heavily along, at a height so immeasurable that their harsh voices were by distance modified into a pleasing murmur. And now a little fish jumped in the streamlet; and the splash, trifling as it was, with which he fell back on the quiet surface, half startled me.

A moment afterward an acorn plumped down on my head, and as I looked up, there sat, on a limb not ten feet above me, an impudent rogue of a gray squirrel, half as big as a rabbit, erect upon his haunches, working away at the twin brother of the acorn he had dropped upon my hat to break my reverie, rasping it audibly with his chisel-shaped teeth, and grinning at me just as coolly as though I were a harmless scare-crow.

When I grew tired of observing him, and looked toward the sky again, behold the western ridge, which is far higher than the eastern hills, had caught upon its summits the first bright rays of the vet unseen day-god; while the rosy flush of the east had

brightened into a blaze of living gold, exceeded only by the glorious hues with which a few bright specks of misty cloud glowed out against the azure firmament, like coals of actual fire.

Again a louder splash aroused me; and, as I turned, there floated on a glassy basin, into which the ripples of a tiny fall subsided, three wood-ducks, with a noble drake, that loveliest in plumage of all aquatic fowl, perfectly undisturbed and fearless, although within ten yards of their most dreaded enemy.

How beautiful are all their motions! There! one has reared herself half way out of the water; another stretches forth a delicate web foot to scratch her ear, as handily as a dog on dry land; and now the drake reflects his purple neck to preen his ruffled wing, and now—bad luck to you, Peacock, why did you snort and stamp?—they are off like a bullet, and out of sight in an instant.

And now out comes the sun himself, and with him the accursed hum of a musquitoe—and hark! hush!—what was that?—was it? By Heavens! it was the deep note of a fox-hound! Aye! there comes Harry's cheer, faintly heard, swelling up the breeze.

“Have at him, there! Ha-a-ve at him, good lads!”

Again! again! those are the musical deep voices of the slow hounds! They have a dash in them of the old Southern breed! And now! there goes the yell! the quick sharp yelping rally of those two high-bred bitches.

By heaven! they must be viewing him! How the woods ring and crash!

“Together hark! Together hark! Together! For-ra-ard, good lads, get for-a-ard! Hya-a-araway!”

Well halloaed, Harry! I could swear to that last screech, out of ten thousand, though it is near ten years since I last heard it! But heavens! how they press him! Hang it! there goes a shot—the squire has fired at him, as he tried the earths! Now, if he have but missed him, and Pan, the god of hunters, send it so, he has no chance but to try the open.

By Jove he has! he must have missed! for Bonny Belle and Blossom are raving half a mile this side of him already. And now Tom sees him—how quietly he steals up to the fence. There! he has fired! and all our sport is up! No! no! he waves his hat and points this way! Can he have missed? No! he has got a fox!—he lifts it out by the brush—there must have been two, then, on foot together. He has done it well to

get that he has killed away, or they would have stopped on him!

Hush! the leaves rustle here beside me, with a quick patter—the twigs crackle—it is he! Move not! not for your life, Peacock! There! he has broken cover fairly! Now he is half across the field! he stops to listen! Ah! he will head again. No! no! that crash, when they came upon the warm blood, has decided him—away he goes, with his brush high, and its white tag braided in the sunshine—now I may halloa him away.

“Whoop! gone awa-ay! whoop!”

I was answered on the instant by Harry’s quick—

“Hark holloa! get awa-ay! to him hark! to him hark! hark holloa!”

Most glorious Artemis, what heaven-stirring music! And yet there are but poor six couple; the scent must be as hot as fine, for every hound seems to have twenty tongues, and every leaf an hundred echoes! How the boughs crash again! Lo! they are here! Bonny Belle leading—head and stern up, with a quick panting yelp! Blossom, and Dangerous, and Dauntless scarcely a length behind her, striving together, neck and neck; and, by St. Hubert, it must be a scent of twenty thousand, for here these heavy Southrons are scarcely two rods behind them.

But fidget not, good Peacock! fret not, most excellent Pythagoras! one moment more, and I am not the boy to baulk you. And here comes Harry on the gray; by George! he makes the brushwood crackle! Now for a nasty leap out of the tangled swamp! a high six-barred fence of rough trees, leaning toward him, and up hill! surely he will not try it!

.Will he not though?

See!—his rein is tight yet easy! his seat, how beautiful, how firm, yet how relaxed and graceful! Well done, indeed! He slacks his rein one instant as the gray rises! the rugged rails are cleared, and the firm pull supports him! but Harry moves not in the saddle—no! not one hair’s breadth! A five foot fence to him is nothing! You shall not see the slightest variation between his attitude in that strong effort, and in the easy gallop. If Tom Draw saw him now, he could have some excuse for calling him “half horse”—and he does see him! hark to that most unearthly knell! like unto nothing, either heavenly or human! He waves his hat and hurries back as fast as he is able to the horses, well knowing that for pedestrians at least, the morning’s sport is ended.

Harry and I were now almost abreast, riding in parallel lines, down the rich valley, very nearly at the top speed of our horses; taking fence after fence in our stroke, and keeping well up with the hounds, which were running almost mute, such was the furious speed to which the blazing scent excited them.

We had already passed above two-thirds of the whole distance that divides the range of woods, wherein we found him, and the pretty village which we had constituted our head quarters, a distance of at least three miles; and now a very difficult and awkward obstacle presented itself to our farther progress, in the shape of a wide yawning brook between sheer banks of several feet in height, broken, with rough and pointed stones, the whole being at least five yards across. The gallant hounds dashed over it; and, when we reached it, were half way across the grass field next beyond it.

"Hold him hard, Frank," Harry shouted; "hold him hard, man, and cram him at it!"

And so I did, though I had little hope of clearing it. I lifted him a little on the snaffle, gave him the spur just as he reached the brink, and with a long and swinging leap, so easy that its motion was in truth scarce perceptible, he swept across it; before I had the time to think, we were again going at our best pace almost among the hounds.

Over myself, I cast a quick glance back toward Harry, who, by a short turn of the chase had been thrown a few yards behind me. He charged it gallantly; but on the very verge, cowed by the brightness of the rippling water, the gray made a half stop, but leaped immediately, beneath the application of the galling spur; he made a noble effort, but it was scarce a thing to be effected by a standing leap, and it was with far less pleasure than surprise, that I saw him drop his hind legs down the steep bank, having just landed with fore-feet in the meadow.

I was afraid, indeed, he must have had an ugly fall, but, picked up quickly by the delicate and steady finger of his rider, the good horse found some slight projection of the bank, whereby to make a second spring. After a heavy flounder, however which must have dismounted any less perfect horseman, he recovered himself well, and before many minutes was again abreast of me.

Thus far the course of the hunted fox had lain directly homeward, down the valley; but now the turnpike road making a sudden turn crossed his line at right angles, while another nar-

rower road coming in at a tangent, went off to the south-westward in the direction of the bold projection, which I had learned to recognise as Rocky Hill; over the high fence into the road; well performed, gallant horses! And now they check for a moment, puzzling about on the dry sandy turnpike.

“Dangerous feathers on it now! Speak to it! speak to it, rood hound!”

How beautiful that flourish of the stern with which he darts away on the recovered scent; with what a yell they open it once again! Harry was right, he makes for Rocky Hill, but up this plaguey lane, where the scent lies but faintly. Now! now! the road turns off again far westward of his point! He may, by Jove! and he *has* left it!

“Have at him then, lads; he is ours!”

And lo! the pace increases. Ha! what a sudden turn, and in the middle too of a clear pasture.

“Has he been headed, Harry?”

“No, no; his strength is failing.”

And see! he makes his point again toward the hill; it is within a quarter of a mile, and if he gain it we can do nothing with him, for it is full of earths. But he will never reach it. See! he turns once again; how exquisitely well those bitches run it; three times he has doubled, now almost as short as a hare, and they, running breast-high, have turned with him each time, not over-running it a yard.

See how the sheep have drawn together into phalanx yonder, in that bare pasture to the eastward; he has crossed that field for a thousand! Yes, I am right. See! they turn once again. What a delicious rally! An outspread towel would cover those four leading hounds—now Dauntless has it; has it by half a neck.

“He always goes up when a fox is sinking,” Harry exclaimed, pointing toward him with his hunting whip.

Aye! he has given up his point entirely; he knew he could not face the hill. Look! look at those carrion crows! how low they stoop over that woody bank. That is his line. Here is the road again. Over it once more merrily! and now we view him.

“Whoop! Forra-ard, lads, forra-ard!”

He cannot hold five minutes; and see, there comes fat Tom, pounding that mare along the road as if her fore-feet were of hammered iron; he has come up along the turnpike, at an in

fernal pace, while that turn favored him ; but he will only see us kill him, and that, too, at a respectful distance.

Another brook stretches across our course, hurrying to join the greater stream along the banks of which we have so long been speeding ; but this is a little one ; there ! we have cleared it cleverly. Now ! now ! the hounds are viewing him. Poor brute ! his day is come. See how he twists and doubles. Ah now they have him ! No ! that short turn has saved him, and he gains the fence—he will lie down there ! No ! he stretches gallantly across the next field—game to the last, poor devil ! There !

“ Who-whoop ! Dead ! dead ! who-whoop ! ”

And in another instant Harry had snatched him from the hounds, and holding him aloft displayed him to the rest, as they came up along the road.

“ A pretty burst,” he said to me, “ a pretty burst, Frank, and a good kill ; but they can’t stand before the hounds, the foxes here, like our stout islanders ; they are not forced to work so hard to gain their living. But now let us get homeward ; I want my breakfast, I can tell you, and then a rattle at the quail. I mean to get full forty brace to-day, I promise you.”

“ And we,” said I, “ have marked down fifteen brace already toward it ; right in the line of our beat, Tom says.”

“ That’s right ; well, let us go on.”

And in a short half hour we were all once again assembled about Tom’s hospitable board, and making such a breakfast, on every sort of eatable that can be crowded on a breakfast table, as sportsmen only have a right to make ; nor they, unless they have walked ten, or galloped half as many miles, before it.

Before we had been in an hour, Harry once again roused us out. All had been, during our absence, fully prepared by the indefatigable Tim ; who, as the day before, accoutred with spare shot and lots of provender, seemed to grudge us each morsel that we ate, so eager was he to see us take the field in season.

Off we went then ; but what boots it to repeat a thrice told tale ; suffice it, that the dogs worked as well as dogs can work ; that birds were plentiful, and lying good ; that we fagged hard, and shot on the whole passably, so that by sunset we had exceeded Harry’s forty brace by fifteen birds, and got beside nine couple and a half of woodcock ; which we found, most unexpectedly, basking themselves in the open meadow, along the

grassy banks of a small rill, without a bush or tree within five hundred yards of them.

Evening had closed before we reached the well known tavern-stand, and the merry blaze of the fire, and many candles, showed us, while yet far distant, that due preparations were in course for our entertainment.

“What have we here?” cried Harry, as we reached the door—“Race horses? Why, Tom, by heaven! we’ve got the Flying Dutchman here again; now for a night of it.”

And so in truth it was, a most wet, and most jovial one, seasoned with no small wit; but of that, more anon.

DAY THE FOURTH.

WHEN we had entered Tom’s hospitable dwelling, and delivered over our guns to be duly cleaned, and the dogs to be suppressed, by Tim Matlock, I passed through the parlor, on my way to my own crib, where I found Archer in close confabulation with a tall rawboned Dutchman, with a keen freckled face, small ‘cute gray eyes, looking suspiciously about from under the shade of a pair of straggling sandy eyebrows, small reddish whiskers, and a head of carrotty hair as rough and tangled as a fox’s back.

His aspect was a wondrous mixture of sneakingness and smartness, and his expression did most villainously belie him, if he were not as sharp a customer as ever wagged an elbow, or betted on a horse-race.

“Frank,” exclaimed Harry, as I entered, “I make you know Mr. McTaggart, better known hereabouts as the Flying Dutchman, though how he came by a Scotch name I can’t pretend to say; he keeps the best quarter horses, and plays the best hand of whist in the country; and now, get yourself clean as quick as possible, for Tom never gives one five minutes wherein to dress himself; so bustle.”

And off he went as he had finished speaking, and I shaking my new friend cordially by an exceeding bony unwashed paw, incontinently followed his example—and in good time I did so; for I had scarcely changed my shooting boots and wet worsteds for slippers and silk socks, before my door, as usual, was lounged open by Tom’s massy foot, and I was thus exhorted.

"Come, come, your supper's gittin' cold; I never see such men as you and Archer is; you're wash, wash, wash—all day. It's little water enough that you use any other ways."

"Why, is there any other use for water, Tom?" I asked, simply enough.

"It's lucky if there aint, any how—leastwise, where you and Archer is—else you'd leave none for the rest of us. It's a good thing you han't thought of washing your darned stinking hides in rum—you *will* be at it some of these odd days, I warrant me—why now, McTaggart, it's only yesterday I caught Archer up stairs, a fiddling away up there at his teeth with a little ivory brush; brushing them with cold water—cleaning them he calls it. Cuss all such trash, says I."

While I was listening in mute astonishment, wondering whether *in truth* the old savage never cleaned his teeth, Archer made his appearance, and to a better supper never did I sit down, than was spread at the old round table, in such profusion as might have well sufficed to feed a troop of horse.

"What have we got here, Tom?" cried Harry, as he took the head of the *social board*; "quail-pie, by George—are there any peppers in it, Tom?"

"Sartain there is," replied that worthy, "and a prime rump-steak in the bottom, and some first-best salt pork, chopped fine, and three small onions; like little Wax-skin used to fix them, when he was up here last fall."

"Take some of this pie, Frank;" said Archer, as he handed me a huge plate of leafy reeking pie-crust, with a slice of fat steak, and a plump hen quail, and gravy, and etceteras, that might have made an alderman's mouth water; "and if you don't say it's the very best thing you ever tasted, you are not half so good a judge as I used to hold you. It took little Johnny and myself three wet days to concoct it. Pie, Tom, or roast pig?" he continued; "or broiled woodcock? Here they are, all of hem?"

"Why, I reckon I'll take cock; briled meat wants to be ate right stret away as soon as it comes off the griddle; and of all darned nice ways of cooking, to brile a thing, quick now, over hot hickory ashes, is the best for me!"

"I believe you're right about eating the cock first, for they will not be worth a farthing if they get cold. So you stick to the pig, do you—hey, McTaggart? Well, there is no reckoning

on taste—holloa, Tim, look sharp! the champagne all 'round—I'm choking!"

And for some time no sound was heard, but the continuous clatter of knives and forks, the occasional popping of a cork succeeded by the gurgling of the generous wine as it flowed in to the tall rummers; and every now and then a loud and rattling eructation from Tom Draw, who, as he said, could never half enjoy a meal if he could not stop now and then to blow off steam.

At last, however—for supper, alas! like all other earthly pleasures, must come to an end—"The fairest still the fleetest"—our appetites waned gradually; and notwithstanding Harry's earnest exhortations, and the production of a broiled ham-bone, devilled to the very utmost pitch of English mustard, soy, oil of Aix, and cayenne pepper, by no hands, as may be guessed, but those of that universal genius, Timothy; one by one, we gave over our labors edacious, to betake us to potations of no small depth or frequency.

"It is directly contrary to my rule, Frank, to drink before a good day's shooting—and a good day I mean to have to-morrow!—but I am thirsty, and the least thought chilly; so here goes for a debauch! Tim, look in my box with the clothes, and you will find two flasks of curaçao; bring them down, and a dozen lemons, and some lump sugar—look alive! and you, Tom, out with your best brandy; I'll make a jorum that will open your eyes *tight* before you've done with it. That's right, Tim; now get the soup-tureen, the biggest one, and see that it's clean. The old villain has got a punch-bowl—bring half a dozen of champagne, a bucket full of ice, and then go down into the kitchen, and make two quarts of green tea, as strong as possible; and when it's made, set it to cool in the ice-house!"

In a few minutes all the ingredients were at hand; the rind, peeled carefully from all the lemons, was deposited with two tumblers full of finely powdered sugar in the bottom of the tureen; thereupon were poured instantly three pints of pale old Cognac; and these were left to steep, without admixture, until Tim Matlock made his entrance with the cold, strong, green tea; two quarts of this, strained clear, were added to the brandy, and then two flasks of curaçoa!

Into this mixture a dozen lumps of clear ice were thrown, and the whole stirred up 'till the sugar was entirely suspended; then pop! pop! went the long necks, and their creaming nectar was

discharged into the bowl; and by the body of Bacchus—as the Italians swear—and by his soul, too, which he never steeped in such delicious nectar, what a drink that was, when it was completed.

Even Tom Draw, who ever was much disposed to look upon strange potables as trash, and who had eyed the whole proceedings with ill-concealed suspicion and disdain, when he had quaffed off a pint-beaker full, which he did without once moving the vessel from his head, smacked his lips with a report which might have been heard half a mile off, and which resembled very nearly the crack of a first-rate huntsman's whip.

"That's not slow, now!" he said, half dubiously, "to tell the truth now, that's first rate; I reckon, though, it would be better if there wasn't that tea into it—it makes it weak and trashy-like!"

"You be hanged!" answered Harry, "that's mere affectation—that smack of your lips told the story; did you ever hear such an infernal sound? I never did, by George!"

"Begging your pardon, Measter Archer," interposed Timothy, pulling his forelock, with an expression of profound respect, mingled with a ludicrous air of regret, at being forced to differ in the least degree from his master; "begging your pardon, Measter Archer, that was a roommer noise, and by a vary gre-at de-al too, when Measter McTavish sneezed me clean oot o' t' wagon!"

"What's that?—what the devil's that?" cried I; "this McTavish must be a queer genius; one day I hear of his frightening a bull out of a meadow, and the next of his sneezing a man out of a phaeton."

"It's simply true! *both* are simply true! We were driving very slowly on an immensely hot day in the middle of August, between Lebanon Springs and Claverack; McTavish and I on the front seat, and Tim behind. Well! we were creeping at a foot's pace, upon a long, steep hill, just at the very hottest time of day; not a word had been spoken for above an hour, for we were all tired and languid—except once, when McTavish asked for his third tumbler, since breakfast, of Starke's Ferintosh, of which we had three two-quart bottles in the liquor case—when suddenly, without any sign or warning, McTavish gave a sneeze which, on my honor, was scarcely inferior in loudness to a pistol shot! The horses started almost off the road, I jumped about half a foot off my seat, and positively without exaggeration,

Timothy tumbled slap out of the wagon into the road, and lay there sprawling in the dust, while Mac sat perfectly unmoved, without a smile upon his face, looking straight before him, exactly as if nothing had happened."

"Nonsense, Harry," exclaimed I; "that positively won't go down."

"That's an eternal lie, now, Archer!" Tom chimed in; "leastwise I don't know why I should say so neither, for I never saw no deviltry goin' on yet, that didn't come as nat'ral to McTavish, as lying to a minister, or"—

"Rum to Tom Draw!" responded Harry. "But it's as true as the gospel, ask Timothy there!"

"Nay it's all true; only it's scarce so bad i' t' story, as it was i' right airnest! Ay cooped oot o' t' drag—loike ivry thing—my hinder eend was sair a moanth and better!"

"Now then," said I, "it's Tom's turn; "let us hear about the bull."

"Oh, the bull!" answered Tom. "Well you see, Archer there, and little Waxskin—you know little Waxskin, I guess, Mister Forester—and old McTavish, had gone down to shoot to Hell-hole—where we was yesterday, you see!—well now! it was hot—hot, worst kind; I tell you—and I was sort o' tired out—so Waxskin, in he goes into the thick, and Archer arter him, and up the old crick side—thinkin, you see, that we was goin up, where you and I walked yesterday—but not a bit of it; we never thought of no such thing, not we! We sot ourselves down underneath the haystacks, and made ourselves two good stiff horns of toddy; and cooled off there, all in the shade, as slick as silk.

"Well, arter we'd been there quite a piece, bang! we hears, in the very thick of the swamp—bang! bang!—and then I heerd Harry Archer roar out 'mark! mark!—Tom, mark!—you old fat rascal,'—and sure enough, right where I should have been, if I'd been a doin right, out came two woodcock—big ones—they looked like hens, and I kind o' thought it was a shame, so I got up to go to them, and called McTavish to go with me; but torights, jest as he was a gitting up, a heap of critters comes all chasin up, scart by a dog, I reckon, kickin their darned heels up, and bellowin like mad—and there was one young bull amongst them, quite a lump of a bull now I tell you; and the bull he came up pretty nigh to us, and stood, and stawmped, and sort o' snorted, as if he didn't know right what he would

be arter, and McTavish, he gits up, and turns right round with his back to the critter; he got a bit of a round jacket on, and he stoops down till his head came right atween his legs, kind o' straddlin like, so that the bull could see nothing of him but his t'other eend, and his head right under it, chin uppermost, with his big black whiskers, lookin as fierce as all h—ll, and fiercer; well! the bull he stawmped agin, and pawed, and bellowed, and was in hopes, I swon, that he would have hooked him; but just then McTavish, starts to run, going along as I have told you, hind eend foremost—*bo-oo* went the bull, *a-boo-oo*, and off he starts like a strick, with his tail stret on eend, and his eyes starin. and all the critters arter him, and then they kind o' circled round—and all stood still and stared—and stawmped, 'till he got nigh to them, and then they all stricks off agin; and so they went on—runnin and then standin still,—and so they went on the hull of an hour, I'll be bound; and I lay there upon my back laughin 'till I was stiff and sore all over; and then came Waxskin and all Archer, wrathly as h—ll and swearin'—Lord how they did swear!

“They'd been a slavin there through the darned thorns and briers, and the old stinkin mud holes, and flushed a most almighty sight of cock, where the brush was too thick to shoot them, and every one they flushed, he came stret out into the open field, where Archer knew we should have been, and where we should have killed a thunderin mess, and no mistake; and they went on dammin, and wonderin, and sweatin through the brush, till they got out to the far eend, and there they had to make tracks back to us through the bog meadow, under a brilin sun, and when they did get back, the bull was jest a goin through the bars—and every d—d drop o' the rum was dranked up; and the sun was settin, and the day's shootin—that was spoiled!—and then McTavish tantalized them the worst sort. But I did laugh to kill; it was the best I ever *did* see, was that spree—Ha! ha! ha!”

And, as he finished, he burst out into his first horse laugh, in which I chorused him most heartily, having in truth been in convulsions, between the queerness of his lingo, and the absurdly grotesque attitudes into which he threw himself, in imitating the persons concerning whom his story ran. After this, jest succeeded jest! and story, story! 'till, in good truth, the giass circling the while with most portentous speed, I began to feel bees in my head, and till in truth no one, I believe, of the party,

was entirely collected in his thoughts, except Tom Draw, whom it is as impossible for liquor to affect, as it would be for brandy to make a hogshead drunk, and who stalked off to bed with an air of solemn gravity that would have well become a Spanish grandee of the olden time, telling us, as he left the room, that we were all as drunk as thunder, and that we should be stinkin in our beds till noon to-morrow.

A prediction, by the way, which he took right good care to defeat in his own person; for in less than five hours after we retired, which was about the first of the small hours, he rushed into my room, and finding that the awful noises which he made, had no effect in waking me, dragged me bodily out of bed, and clapping my wet sponge in my face, walked off, as he said, to fetch the bitters, which were to make me as fine as silk upon the instant.

This time, I must confess that I did not look with quite so much disgust on the old apple-jack; and in fact, after a moderate horn, I completed my ablutions, and found myself perfectly fresh and ready for the field. Breakfast was soon despatched, and on this occasion as soon as we had got through the broiled ham and eggs, the wagon made its appearance at the door.

"What's this, Harry?" I exclaimed; "where are we bound for, now?"

"Why, Master Frank," he answered, "to tell you the plain truth, while you were sleeping off the effects of the last night's regent's punch, I was on foot inquiring into the state of matters and things; and since we have pretty well exhausted our home beats, and I have heard that some ground, about ten miles distant, is in prime order, I have determined to take a try there; but we must look pretty lively, for it is seven now, and we have got a drive of ten stiff miles before us. Now, old Grampus, are you ready?"

"Aye, aye!" responded Tom, and mounted up, a work of no small toil for him, into the back seat of the wagon, where I soon took my seat beside him, with the two well-broke setters crouching at our feet, and the three guns strapped neatly to the side rails of the wagons. Harry next mounted the box. Tim touched his hat and jumped up to his side, and off we rattled at a merry trot, wheeling around the rival tavern which stood in close propinquity to Tom's; then turning short again to the left hand, along a broken stony road, with severai high and

long hills, and very awkward bridges in the valleys, to the north-westward of the village.

Five miles brought us into a pretty little village lying at the base of another ridge of what might almost be denominated mountains, save that they were cultivated to the very top. As we paused on the brow of this, another glorious valley spread out to our view, with the broad sluggish waters of the Wallkill winding away, with hardly any visible motion, toward the north-east, through a vast tract of meadow-land covered with high, rank grass, dotted with clumps of willows and alder brakes, and interspersed with large, deep swamps, thick-set with high grown timber; while far beyond these, to the west, lay the tall variegated chain of the Shawangunk mountains.

Rattling briskly down the hill, we passed another thriving village, built on the mountain side; made two or three sharp ugly turns, still going at a smashing pace, and coming on the level ground, entered an extensive cedar swamp, impenetrable above with the dark boughs of the evergreen colossi, and below with half a dozen varieties of rhododendron, calmia, and azalia. Through this dark, dreary track, the road ran straight as the bird flies, supported on the trunks of trees, constituting what is here called a corduroy road; an article which, praise be to all the gods, is disappearing now so rapidly, that this is the only bit to be found in the civilized regions of New York—and bordered to the right and left by ditches of black tenacious mire. Beyond this we scaled another sandy hillock, and pulled up at a little wayside tavern, at the door of which Harry set himself lustily to halloa.

“Why, John; hilloa, hillo; John Riker!”

Whereon, out came, stooping low to pass under the lintel of a very fair sized door, one of the tallest men I ever looked upon; his height, too, was exaggerated by the narrowness of his chest and shoulders, which would have been rather small for a man of five foot seven; but to make up for this, his legs were monstrous, his arms muscular, and his whole frame evidently powerful and athletic, though his gait was slouching, and his air singularly awkward and unhandy.

“Why, how do, Mr. Archer? I hadn’t heerd you was in these parts—arter woodcock, I reckon?”

“Yes, John, as usual; and you must go along with us, and show us the best ground.”

“Well, you see, I can’t go to-day—for Squire Breawn, and

Dan Faushea, and a whole grist of Goshen boys is comin' over to the island here to fish ; but you carn't well go wrong."

"Why not ; are birds plenty?"

"Well ! I guess they be ! Plentier than ever yet I see them here."

"By Jove ! that's good news," Harry answered ; "where shall we find the first?"

"Why, amost anywheres—but here, jist down by the first bridge, there's a hull heap—leastwise there was a Friday—and then you'd best go on to the second bridge, and keep the edge of the hill right up and down to Merrit's Island ; and then beat down here home to the first bridge again. But won't you liquor?"

"No, not this morning, John ; we did our liquoring last night. Tom, do you hear what John says?"

"I hear, I hear," growled out old Tom ; "but the critter lies like nauthen. He always does lie, cuss him."

"Well, here goes, and we'll soon see !"

And away we went again, spinning down a little descent, to a flat space between the hill-foot and the river, having a thick tangled swamp on the right, and a small boggy meadow full of grass, breast-high, with a thin open alder grove beyond it on the left. Just as we reached the bridge Harry pulled up.

"Jump out, boys, jump out ! Here's the spot."

"I tell you there aint none ; darn you ! There aint none never here, nor haint been these six years ; you know that now, yourself, Archer."

"We'll try it, all the same," said Harry, who was coolly loading his gun. "The season has been wetter than common, and this ground is generally too dry. Drive on, Tim, over the bridge, into the hollow ; you'll be out of shot there ; and wait till we come. Holloa ! mark, Tom."

For, as the wagon wheels rattled upon the bridge, up jumped a cock out of the ditch by the road side, from under a willow brush, and skimmed past all of us within five yards. Tom Draw and I, who had got out after Harry, were but in the act of ramming down our first barrels ; but Harry, who had loaded one, and was at that moment putting down the wad upon the second, dropped his ramrod with the most perfect sang-froid I ever witnessed, took a cap out of his right-hand pocket, applied it to the cone, and pitching up his gun, knocked down the bird

as it wheeled to cross the road behind us, by the cleverest shot possible.

"That's pretty well for no birds, anyhow, Tom," he exclaimed, dropping his butt to load. "Go and gather that bird, Frank, to save time; he lies in the wagon rut, there. How now? down charge, you Chase, sir! what are you about?"

The bird was quickly bagged, and Harry loaded. We stepped across a dry ditch, and both dogs made game at the same instant.

"Follow the red dog, Frank!" cried Archer, "and go very slow; there are birds here!"

And as he spoke, while the dogs were crawling along, cat-like, pointing at every step, and then again creeping onward, up skirred two birds under the very nose of the white setter, and crossed quite to the left of Harry. I saw him raise his gun, but that was all; for at the self-same moment one rose to me, and my ear caught the flap of yet another to my right; five barrels were discharged so quickly, that they made but three reports; I cut my bird well down, and looking quickly to the left, saw nothing but a stream of feathers drifting along the wind. At the same time, old Tom shouted on the right,

"I have killed two, by George! What have you done, boys?"

"Two, I!" said Archer. "Wait, Frank, don't you begin to load till one of us is ready; there'll be another cock up, like enough. Keep your barrel; I'll be ready in a jiffy!"

And well it was that I obeyed him, for at the squeak of the card, in its descent down his barrel, another bird did rise, and was making off for the open alders, when my whole charge riddled him; and instantly at the report three more flapped up, and of course went off unharmed; but we marked them, one by one, down in the grass at the wood edge. Harry loaded again. We set off to pick up our dead birds. Shot drew, as I thought, on my first, and pointed dead within a yard of where he fell. I walked up carelessly, with my gun under my arm, and was actually stooping to bag him, as I thought, when whiz! one rose almost in my face; and, bothered by seeing us all around him, towered straight up into the air. Taken completely by surprise, I blazed away in a hurry, and missed clean; but not five yards did he go, before Tom cut him down.

"Aha, boy! whose eye's wiped now?"

"Mine, Tom, very fairly; but can that be the same cock I knocked down, Archer?"

"Not a bit of it; I saw your's fall dead as a stone; he lies half a yard farther in that tussoc."

"How the deuce did you see him? Why, you were shooting your own at the same moment."

"All knack, Frank; I marked both my own and yours, and one of Tom's besides. Are you ready? Hold up, Shot! There; he has got your dead bird. Was I not right? And look to! for, by Jove! he is standing on another, with the dead bird in his mouth! That's pretty, is it not?"

Again two rose, and both were killed; one by Tom, and one by Archer; my gun hanging fire.

"That's nine birds down before we have bagged one," said Archer; "I hope no more will rise, or we'll be losing these."

But this time his hopes were not destined to meet accomplishment, for seven more woodcock got up, five of which were scattered in the grass around us, wing-broken or dead, before we had even bagged the bird which Shot was gently mouthing.

"I never saw anything like this in my life, Tom. Did you?" cried Harry.

"I never did, by George!" responded Tom. "Now do you think there's any three men to be found in York, such darned eternal fools as to be willing to shoot a match agin us?"

"To be sure I do, lots of them; and to beat us too, to boot, you stupid old porpoise. Why, there's Harry T——, and Nick L——, and a dozen more of them, that you and I would have no more chance with, than a gallon of brandy would have of escaping from you at a single sitting. But we have shot pretty well, to-day. Now do, for heaven's sake, let us try to bag them!"

And scattered though they were in all directions, among the most infernal tangled grass I ever stood on, those excellent dogs retrieved them one by one, till every bird was pocketed. We then beat on and swept the rest of the meadow, and the outer verge of the alders, picking up three more birds, making a total of seventeen brought to bag in less than half an hour. We then proceeded to the wagon, took a good pull of water from a beautiful clear spring by the road-side, properly qualified with whiskey, and rattled on about one mile farther to the second bridge. Here we again got out.

"Now, Tim," said Harry, "mark me well! Drive gently

to the old barrack yonder under the west-end of that wood-side, unhitch the horses and tie them in the shade; you can give them a bite of meadow hay at the same time; and then get luncheon ready. We shall be with you by two o'clock at 'arthest."

"Ay, ay, sur!"

And off he drove at a steady pace, while we, striking into the meadow, to the left hand of the road, went along getting sport such as I never beheld, or even dreamed of before. For about five hundred yards in width from the stream, the ground was soft and miry to the depth of some four inches, with long sword-grass quite knee-deep, and at every fifty yards a bunch of willows or swamp alders. In every clump of bushes we found from three to five birds, and as the shooting was for the most part very open, we rendered on the whole a good account of them. The dogs throughout behaved superbly, and Tom was altogether frantic with the excitement of the sport. The time seemed short indeed, and I could not for a moment have imagined that it was even noon, when we reached the barrack.

This was a hut of rude, unplanned boards, which had been put up formerly with the intent of furnishing a permanent abode for some laboring men, but which, having been long deserted, was now used only as a temporary shelter by charcoal burners, hay-makers, or like ourselves, stray sportsmen. It was, however, though rudely built, and fallen considerably into decay, perfectly beautiful from its romantic site; for it stood just at the end of a long tangled covert, with a huge pin oak-tree, leaning abruptly out from an almost precipitous bank of yellow sand, completely canopying it; while from a crevice in the sand-stone there welled out a little source of crystal water, which expanded into as sweet a basin as ever served a Dryad for her bath in Arcady, of old.

Before it stretched the wide sweep of meadow land, with the broad blue Wellkill gliding through it, fringed by a skirt of cop-pice, and the high mountains, veiled with a soft autumnal mist, sleeping beyond, robed in their many-colored garb of crimson, gold, and green. Besides the spring the indefatigable Tim had kindled a bright glancing fire, while in the basin were cooling two long-necked bottles of the Baron's best; a clean white cloth was spread in the shade before the barrack door, with plates and cups, and bread cut duly, and a travelling case of cruets, with all the other appurtenances needful.

On our appearance he commenced rooting in a heap of embers, and soon produced six nondescript looking articles enclosed—as they dress maintenon cutlets or red mullet—in double sheets of greasy letter paper—these he incontinently dished, and to my huge astonishment they turned out to be three couple of our woodcock, which that indefatigable varlet had picked, and baked under the ashes, according to some strange idea, whether original, or borrowed at second hand from his master, I never was enabled to ascertain.

The man, be he whom he may, who invented that *plat*, is second neither to Caramel nor to Ude—the exquisite juicy tenderness of the meat, the preservation of the gravy, the richness of the trail—by heaven! they were inimitable.

In that sweet spot we loitered a full hour—then counted our bag, which amounted already to fifty-nine cock, not including those with which Tim's gastronomic art had spread for us a table in the wilderness—then leaving him to pack up and meet us at the spot where we first started, we struck down the stream homeward, shooting our way along a strip of coppice about ten yards in breadth, bounded on one side by a dry bare bank of the river, and on the other by the open meadows. We of course kept the verges of this covert, our dogs working down the middle, and so well did we manage it, that when we reached the wagon, just as the sun was setting, we numbered a hundred and twenty-five birds bagged, besides two which were so cut by the shot as to be useless, six which we had devoured, and four or five which we lost in spite of the excellence of our retrievers. When we got home again, although the Dutchman was on the spot, promising us a quarter race upon the morrow, and pressing earnestly for a rubber to-night, we were too much used up to think of anything but a good supper and an early bed.

DAY THE FIFTH.

OUR last day's shooting in the vale of Sugar-loaf was over ; and, something contrary to Harry's first intention, we had decided, instead of striking westward into Sullivan or Ulster, to drive five miles upon our homeward route, and beat the Long-pond mountain—not now for such small game as woodcock, quail, or partridge ; but for a herd of deer, which, although now but rarely found along the western hills, was said to have been seen already several times, to the number of six or seven head, in a small cove, or hollow basin, close to the summit of the Bellevalle ridge.

As it was not of course our plan to return again to Tom Draw's, everything was now carefully and neatly packed away ; the game, of which we had indeed a goodly stock, was produced from Tom's ice-house, where, suspended from the rafters, it had been kept as sound and fresh as though it had been all killed only on the preceding day.

A long deep box, fitting beneath the gun-case under the front seat, was now produced, and proved to be another of Harry's notable inventions ; for it was lined throughout, lid, bottom, sides and all, with zinc, and in the centre had a well or small compartment of the same material, with a raised grating in the bottom. This well was forthwith lined with a square yard, or rather more, of flannel, into which was heaped a quantity of ice pounded as fine as possible, sufficient to cram it absolutely to the top ; the rest of the box was then filled with the birds, displayed in regular rows, with heads and tails alternating, and a thin coat of clean dry wheaten straw between each layer, until but a few inches' depth remained between the noble pile and the lid of this extempore refrigerator ; this space being filled in with flannel packed close and folded tightly, the box was locked and thrust into the accurately fitting boot by dint of the exertion of Timothy's whole strength.

"There, Frank," cried Harry, who had superintended the storage of the whole with nice scrutiny, "those chaps will keep there as sound as roaches, till we get to young Tom's at Ramapo ; you cannot think what work I had, trying in vain to save them, before I hit upon this method ; I tried hops, which I have known in England to keep birds in an extraordinary manner—for, what you'll scarce believe, I once ate a Ptarmigan, the day

year after it was killed, which had been packed with hops, in perfect preservation, at Farnley, Mr. Fawke's place in Yorkshire!—and I tried prepared charcoal, and got my woodcock down to New York, looking like chimney sweeps, and smelling——”

“What the devil difference does it make to you now, Archer, I'd be pleased to know!” interposed Tom; “what under heaven they smells like—a man that eats cock with their guts in, like you does, needn't stick now, I reckon, for a leetle mite of a stink!”

“Shut up, you old villain,” answered Harry, laughing, “bring the milk punch, and get your great coat on, if you mean to go with us; for it's quite keen this morning, I can tell you; and we must be stirring too, for the sun will be up before we get to Teachman's. Now, Jem, get out the hounds; how do you take them, Tom?”

“Why, that darned Injun, Jem, he'll take them in my lumber wagon—and, I say, Jem, see that you don't over-drive old roan—away with you, and rouse up Garry, he means to go, I guess!”

After a mighty round of punch, in which, as we were now departing, one half at least of the village joined, we all got under way; Tom, buttoned up to the throat in a huge white lion skin wrap-rascal, looking for all the world like a polar bear erect on its hind legs; and all of us muffled up pretty snugly, a proceeding which was rendered necessary by a brisk bracing north-west breeze.

The sky, though it was scarcely the first twilight of an autumnal dawn, was beautifully clear, and as transparent—though still somewhat dusky—as a wide sheet of crystal; a few pale stars were twinkling here and there; but in the east a broad gray streak changing on the horizon's edge to a faint straw color, announced the sun's approach.

The whole face of the country, hill, vale, and woodland, was overspread by an universal coat of silvery hoar-frost; thin wreaths of snowy mist rising above the tops of the sere woodlands, throughout the whole length of the lovely vale, indicated as clearly as though it were traced on a map, the direction of the stream that watered it; and as we paused upon the brow of the first hillock, and looked back toward the village, with its white steeples and neat cottage dwellings buried in the still repose of that early hour, with only one or two faint columns of

blue smoke worming their way up lazily into the cloudless atmosphere, a feeling of regret—such as has often crossed my mind before, when leaving any place wherein I have spent a few days happily, and which I never may see more—rendered me somewhat indisposed to talk.

Something or other—it might with Harry, perhaps, have been a similar train of thought—caused both my comrades to be more taciturn by far than was their wont; and we had rattled over five miles of our route, and scaled the first ridge of the hills, and dived into the wide ravine; midway the depth of this the pretty village of Bellevalle lies on the brink of the dammed rivulet, which, a few yards below the neat stone bridge, takes a precipitous leap of fifty feet, over a rustic wier, and rushes onward, bounding from ledge to ledge of rifted rocks, chafing and fretting as if it were doing a match against time, and were in danger of losing its race.

Thus we had passed the heavy lumber wagon, with Jem and Garry perched on a board laid across it, and the four couple of stanch hounds nestling in the straw which Tom had provided in abundance for their comfort, before the silence was broken by any sounds except the rattle of the wheels, the occasional interjectional whistle of Harry to his horses, or the flip of the well handled whip.

Just, however, as we were shooting ahead of the lumber wain, an exclamation from Tom Draw, which should have been a sentence, had it not been very abruptly terminated in a long rattling eructation, arrested Archer's progress.

Pulling short up where a jog across the road, constructed—after the damnable mode adopted in all the hilly portions of the interior—in order to prevent the heavy rains from channelling the descent, afforded him a chance of stopping on the hill, so as to slack his traces. "How now," he exclaimed; "what the deuce ails you now, you old rhinoceros?"

"Oh, Archer, I feels bad; worst sort, by Judas! It's that milk punch, I reckon; it keeps a raising—raising, all the time like——"

"And you want to lay it, I suppose, like a ghost, in a sea of whiskey; well, I've no especial objection! Here, Tim, hand the case bottle, and the dram cup! No! no! confound you, pass it this way first, for if Tom once gets hold of it, we may say good-bye to it altogether. There," he continued, after we had both taken a moderate sip at the superb old Ferintosh,

“there, now take your chance at it, and for Heaven’s sake do leave a drop for Jem and Garry; by George now, you *shall not* drink it *all!*” as Tom poured down the third cup full, each being as big as an ordinary beer-glass. “There was above a pint and a half in it when you began, and now there’s barely one up-full between the two of them. An’t you ashamed of yourself now, you greedy old devil?”

“It doos go right, I swon!” was the only reply that could be got out of him.

“That’s more a plaguy sight than the bullets will do, out of your old tower musket; you’re so drunk now, I fancy, that you could’nt hold it straight enough to hit a deer at three rods, let alone thirty, which you are so fond of chattering about.”

“Do tell now,” replied Tom, “did you, or any other feller, ever see me shoot the worser for a mite of liquor, and as for deer, that’s all a no sich thing; there arnt no deer a this side of Duck-seedar’s. It’s all a lie of Teachman’s and that Deckering son of a gun.”

“Holloa! hold up, Tom—recollect yesterday!—I thought there had been no cock down by the first bridge there, these six years; why you’re getting quite stupid, and a croaker too, in your old age.”

“Mayhap I be,” he answered rather gruffly; “mayhap I be, but you won’t git no deer to-day, I’ll stand drinks for the company; and if we doos start one, I’ll lay on my own musket agin your rifle.”

Well! we’ll soon see, for here we are,” Harry replied, as after leaving the high-road just at the summit of the Bellevalle mountain, he rattled down a very broken ruddy bye-road at the rate of at least eight miles an hour, vastly to the discomfiture of our fat host, whose fleshy sides were jolted almost out of their skin by the concussion of the wheels against the many stones and jogs which opposed their progress.

“Here we are, or at least soon will be. It is but a short half mile through these woods to Teachman’s cottage. Is there a gun loaded, Tim? It’s ten to one we shall have a partridge fluttering up and treeing here directly; I’ll let the dogs out—get away, Flash! get away, Dan! you little rascals. Jump out, good dogs, Shot, Chase—hie up with you!” and out they went rattling and scrambling through the brush-wood all four abreast!

At the same moment Tim, leaning over into the body of the

wagon, lugged out a brace of guns from their leathern cases; Harry's short ounce ball rifle, and the long single barrell'd duck gun.

"'T roifle is loaden wi' a single ball, and 't single goon wi' yan of them green cartridges!"

"Much good ball and buck-shot will do us against partridge; nevertheless, if one trees, I'll try if I can't cut his head off for him," said Archer, laughing.

"Nay! nay! it be-ant book-shot; it's no but noomber three; tak' haud on't, Measter Draa, tak' haud on't. It's no hoort thee, mon, and 't horses boath stand foire cannily!"

Scarce had Fat Tom obeyed his imperative solicitations, and scarce had Tim taken hold of the ribbands which Harry relinquished the moment he got the rifle into his hands, before a most extraordinary hubbub arose in the little skirt of coppice to our left; the spaniels quested for a second's space at the utmost, when a tremendous crash of the branches arose, and both the setters gave tongue furiously with a quick savage yell.

The road at this point of the wood made a short and very sudden angle, so as to enclose a small point of extremely dense thicket between its two branches; on one of these was our wagon, and down the other the lumber-wain was rumbling, at the moment when this strange and most unexpected outcry started us all.

"What in t' fient's neam is yon?" cried Timothy.

"And what the devil's that?" responded I and Archer in a breath.

But whatever it was that had aroused the dogs to such a most unusual pitch of fury, it went crashing through the brush-wood for some five or six strokes at a fearful rate toward the other wagon; before, however it had reached the road, a most appalling shout from Jem, followed upon the instant by the blended voices of all the hounds opening at once, as on a view, excited us yet farther!

I was still tugging at my double gun, in the vain hope of getting it out time enough for action. Tom had scrambled out of the wagon on the first alarm, and stood eye, ear, and heart erect, by the off side of the horses, which were very restless, pawing, and plunging violently, and almost defying Timothy's best skill to hold them; while Harry, having cast off his box-coat, stood firm and upright on the foot board as a carved statue, with his rifle cocked and ready; when, headed back upon us

by the yell of Lyn and the loud clamor of his fresh foes, the first buck I had seen in America, and the largest I had seen any where, dashed at a single plunge into the round, clearing the green head of a fallen hemlock, apparently without an effort, his splendid antlers laid back on his neck, and his white flag lashing his fair round haunch as the fleet bitches Bonny Belle and Blossom yelled with their shrill fierce trebles close behind him.

Seeing that it was useless to persist in my endeavor to extricate my gun, and satisfied that the matter was in good hands, I was content to look on, an inactive but most eager witness.

Tom, who from his position at the head of the off horse, commanded the first view of the splendid creature, pitched his gun to his shoulder hastily and fired; the smoke drifted across my face, but through its vapory folds I could distinguish the dim figure of the noble hart still bounding unhurt onward; but, before the first echo of the round ringing report of Tom's shot-gun reached my ear, the sharp flat crack of Harry's rifle followed it, and at the self-same instant the buck sprang six feet into the air, and pitched head foremost on the ground; it was but for a moment, however, for with the speed of light he struggled to his feet, and though sore wounded, was yet toiling onward when the two English foxhounds dashed at his throat and pulled him down again.

"Run in, Tom, run in! quick," shouted Harry, "he's not clean killed, and may gore the dogs sadly!"

"I've got no knife," responded Tom, but dauntlessly he dashed in, all the same, to the rescue of the bitches—which I believe he loved almost as well as his own children—and though, encumbered by his ponderous white top-coat, not to say by his two hundred and fifty weight of solid flesh, seized the fierce animal by the brow-antlers, and bore him to the ground, before Harry, who had leaped out of the wagon, with his first words, could reach him.

The next moment the keen short hunting knife, without which Archer never takes the field, had severed at a single stroke the weasand of the gallant brute; the black blood streamed out on the smoking hoar-frost, the full eyes glazed, and, after one sharp fluttering struggle, the life departed from those graceful limbs, which had been but a few short instants previous so full of glorious energy—of fiery vigor.

"Well, that's the strangest thing I ever heard of, let alone

seeing," exclaimed Archer, "fancy a buck like that lying in such a mere fringe of coppice, and so near to the road-side, too! and why the deuce did he lay here till we almost passed him!"

"I know how it's been, any heaw," said Jem, who had by this time come up, and was looking on with much exultation flashing in his keen small eye. "Bill Speer up on the hill there telled me jist now, that they druv a big deer down from the back-bone clear down to this here hollow just above, last night arter dark. Bill shot at him, and kind o' reckoned he hot him—but I guess he's mistaken—leastwise he jumped strong enough jist neaw!—but which on you was 't 'at killed him?"

"I did," exclaimed Tom, "I did by ——!"

"Why you most impudent of all old liars," replied Harry—while at the same time, with a most prodigious chuckle, Tim Matlock pointed to the white bark of a birch sapling, about the thickness of a man's thigh, standing at somewhat less than fifteen paces' distance, wherein the large shot contained by the wire cartridge—the best sporting invention by the way, that has been made since percussion caps—had bedded themselves in a black circle, cut an inch at least into the solid wood, and about two inches in diameter!

"I ken gay and fairly," exclaimed Tim, "'at Ay rammed an Eley's patent cartridge into 't single goon this morning; and yonder is 't i' t' birk tree, and Ay ken a load o' shot fra an unce bullet!"

The laugh was general now against fat Tom; especially as the small wound made by the heavy ball of Harry's rifle was plainly visible, about a hand's breadth behind the heart, on the side toward which he had aimed; while the lead had passed directly through, in an oblique direction forward, breaking the left shoulder blade, and lodging just beneath the skin, whence a touch of the knife dislodged it.

"What now—what now, boys?" cried the old sinner, no whit disconcerted by the general mirth against him. "I say, by gin! I killed him, and I say so yet. Which on ye all—which on ye all daared to go in on him, wishout a knife nor nothen. I killed him, I say, anyhow, and so let's drink!"

"Well, I believe we must wet him," Harry answered, "so get out another flask of whiskey, Tim; and you Jem and Garry lend me a hand to lift this fine chap into the wagon. By Jove! but this will make the Teachmans open their eyes; and

now look sharp! You sent the Teachmans word that we were coming, Tom?"

"Sartin! and they've got breakfast ready long enough before this, anyways."

With no more of delay, but with lots more of merriment and shouting, on we drove; and in five minutes' space, just as the sun was rising, reached the small rude enclosure around two or three log huts, lying just on the verge of the beautiful clear lake. Two long sharp boats, and a canoe scooped out of a whole tree, were drawn up on the sandy beach; a fishing net of many yards in length was drying on the rails; a brace of large, strong, black and tan foxhounds were lying on the step before the door; a dozen mongrel geese, with one wing-tipped wild one among them, were sauntering and gabbling about the narrow yard; and a glorious white-headed fishing eagle, with a clipped wing, but otherwise at large, was perched upon the roof hard by the chimney.

At the rattle of our arrival, out came from the larger of the cottages, three tall rough-looking countrymen to greet us, not one of whom stood less than six foot in his stockings, while two were several inches taller.

Great was their wonder, and loud were their congratulations when they beheld the unexpected prize which we had gained, while on our route; but little space was given at that time to either; for the coffee, which, by the way, was poor enough, and the hot cakes and fried perch, which were capital, and the grilled salt pork, swimming in fat, and the large mealy potatoes bursting through their brown skins, were ready smoking upon a rough wooden board, covered, however, by a clean white table cloth, beside a sparkling fire of wood, which our drive through the brisk mountain air had rendered by no means unacceptable.

We breakfasted like hungry men and hunters, both rapidly and well; and before half an hour elapsed, Archer, with Jem and one of our bold hosts, started away, well provided with powder and ball, and whiskey, and accompanied by all the hounds, to make a circuit of the western hill, on the summit of which they expected to be joined by two or three more of the neighbors, whence they proposed to drive the whole sweep of the forest-clad descent down to the water's edge.

Tim was enjoined to see to the provisions, and to provide as good a dinner as his best gastronomic skill and the contents of

our portable larder might afford, and I was put under the charge of Tom, who seemed, for about an hour, disposed to do nothing but to lie dozing, with a cigar in his mouth, stretched upon the broad of his back, on a bank facing the early sunshine just without the door; while our hosts were collecting bait, preparing fishing tackle, and cleaning or repairing their huge clumsy muskets. At length, when the drivers had been gone already for considerably more than an hour, he got up and shook himself.

“Now, then, boys,” he exclaimed, “we’ll be a movin. You Joe Teachman, what are you lazin there about, cuss you? You go with Mr. Forester and Garry in the big boat, and pull as fast as you can put your oars to water, till you git opposite the white-stone pint—and there lie still as fishes! You may fish, though, if you will, Forester,” he added, turning to me, “and I do reckon the big yellow perch *will* bite the darndest, this cold morning, arter the sun gits fairly up—but soon as ever you hear the hounds holler, or one of them chaps shoot, then look you out right stret away for business! Cale, here, and I’ll take the small boat, and keep in sight of you; and so we can kiver all this eend of the pond like, if the deer tries to cross hereaways. How long is’t, Cale, since we had six on them all at once in the water—six—seven—eight! well, I swon, it’s ten years agone now! But come, we mus’nt stand here talkin, else we’ll get a dammin when they drives down a buck into the pond, and none of us in there to tackle with him!”

So without more ado, we got into our boats, disposed our guns, with the stocks towards us in the bows, laid in our stock of tinder, pipes, and liquor, and rowed off merrily to our appointed stations.

Never, in the whole course of my life, has it been my fortune to look upon more lovely scenery than I beheld that morning. The long narrow winding lake, lying as pure as crystal beneath the liquid skies, reflecting, with the correctness of the most perfect mirror, the abrupt and broken hills, which sank down so precipitously into it—clad as they were in foliage of every gorgeous dye, with which the autumn of America loves to enhance the beauty of her forest pictures—that, could they find their way into its mountain-girdled basin, ships of large burthen might lie afloat within a stone’s throw of the shore—the slopes of the wood-covered knolls, here brown, or golden, and interspersed with the rich crimson of the faded maples,

there verdant with the evergreen leaves of the pine and cedar—and the far azure summits of the most distant peaks, all steeped in the serene and glowing sunshine of an October morning.

For hours we lay there, our little vessel floating as the occasional breath of a sudden breeze, curling the lake into sparkling wavelets, chose to direct our course, smoking our cigars, and chatting cozily, and now and then pulling up a great broad-backed yellow bass, whose flapping would for a time disturb the peaceful silence, which reigned over wood, and dale, and water, quite unbroken save by the chance clamor of a passing crow: yet not a sound betokening the approach of our drivers had reached our ears.

Suddenly, when the sun had long passed his meridian height, and was declining rapidly toward the horizon, the full round shot of a musket rang from the mountain top, followed immediately by a sharp yell, and in an instant the whole basin of the lake was filled with the harmonious discord of the hounds.

I could distinguish on the moment the clear sharp challenge of Harry's high-bred foxhounds, the deep bass voices of the Southern dogs, and the untamable and cur-like yelping of the dogs which the Teachmans had taken with them.

Ten minutes passed full of anxiety, almost of fear.

We knew not as yet whither to turn our boats' head, for every second the course of the hounds seemed to vary, at one instant they would appear to be rushing directly down to us, and the next instant they would turn as though they were going up the hill again. Meantime our beaters were not idle—their stirring shouts, serving alike to animate the hounds, and to force the deer to water, made rock and wood reply in cheery echoes; but, to my wonder, I caught not for a long time one note of Harry's gladsome voice.

At length, as I strained my eyes against the broad hill-side, gilt by the rays of the declining sun, I caught a glimpse of his form running at a tremendous pace, bounding over stock and stone, and plunging through dense thickets, on a portion of the declivity where the tall trees had a few years before been destroyed by accidental fire.

At this moment the hounds were running, to judge from their tongues, parallel to the lake and to the line which he was running—the next minute, with a redoubled clamor, they turned directly down to him. I lost sight of him. But half a minute afterward, the sharp crack of his rifle again rang upon the air,

followed by a triumphant "Whoop! who-whoop!" and then, I knew, another stag had fallen.

The beaters on the hill shouted again louder and louder than before—and the hounds still raved on. By heaven! but there must be a herd of them a-foot! And now the pack divides! The English hounds are bringing their game down—here—by the Lord! just here—right in our very faces! The Southrons have borne away over the shoulder of the hill, still running hot and hard in Jolly Tom's direction.

"By heaven!" I cried, "look, Teachman! Garry, look! There! See you not that noble buck?—he leaped that sumach bush like a race-horse! and see! see! now he will take the water. Bad luck on it! he sees us, and heads back!"

Again the fleet hounds rally in his rear, and chide till earth and air are vocal and harmonious. Hark! hark! how Archer's cheers ring on the wind! Now he turns once again—he nears the edge—how glorious! with what a beautiful bold bound he leaped from that high bluff into the flashing wave! with what a majesty he tossed his antlered head above the spray! with how magnificent and brave a stroke he breasts the curling billows!"

"Give way! my men, give way!"

How the frail bark creaks and groans as we ply the long oars in the rullocks—how the ash bends in our sturdy grasp—how the boat springs beneath their impulse.

"Together, boys! together! now—now we gain—now, Garry, lay your oar aside—up with your musket—now you are near enough—give it to him, in heaven's name! a good shot, too! the bullet ricocheted from the lake scarcely six inches from his nose! Give way again—it's my shot now!"

And lifting my Joe Manton, each barrel loaded with a bullet carefully wadded with greased buckskin, I took a careful aim and fired.

"That's it," cried Garry; "well done, Forester—right through he head, by George!"

And, as he spoke, I fancied for a moment he was right. The noble buck plunged half his height out of the bright blue water, shaking his head as if in the death agony, but the next instant he stretched out again with vigor unimpaired, and I could see that my ball had only knocked a tine off his left antler.

My second barrel still remained, and without lowering the

gun, I drew my second trigger. Again a fierce plunge told that the ball had not erred widely; and this time, when he again sank into his wonted posture, the deep crimson dye that tinged the foam which curled about his graceful neck, as he still struggled, feebly fleet, before his unrelenting foes, gave token of a deadly wound.

Six more strokes of the bending oars—we shot alongside—a noose of rope was cast across his branching tines, the keen knife flashed across his throat, and all was over! We towed him to the shore, where Harry and his comrades were awaiting us with another victim to his unerring aim. We took both bucks and all hands on board, pulled stoutly homeward, and found Tom lamenting.

Two deer, a buck of the first head, and a doe, had taken water close beside him—he had missed his first shot, and in toiling over-hard to recover lost ground, had broken his oar, and been compelled inactively to witness their escape.

Three fat bucks made the total of the day's sport—not one of which had fallen to Tom's boasted musket.

It needed all that Tim's best dinner, with lots of champagne and Ferintosh, could do to restore the fat chap's equanimity; but he at last consoled himself, as we threw ourselves on the lowly beds of the log hut, by swearing that by the eternal devil he'd beat us both at partridges to-morrow.

DAY THE SIXTH.

THE sun rose broad and bright in a firmament of that most brilliant and transparent blue, which I have witnessed in no other country than America, so pure, so cloudless, so immeasurably distant as it seems from the beholder's eye! There was not a speck of cloud from east to west, from zenith to horizon; not a fleece of vapor on the mountain sides; not a breath of air to ruffle the calm basin of the Greenwood lake.

The rock-crowned, forest-mantled ridge, on the farther side of the narrow sheet, was visible almost as distinctly through the medium of the pure fresh atmosphere, as though it had been gazed at through a telescope—the hues of the innumerable

maples, in their various stages of decay, purple, and crimson, and bright gorgeous scarlet, were contrasted with the rich chrome yellow of the birch and poplars, the sere red leaves of the gigantic oaks, and with the ever verdant plumage of the junipers, clustered in massy patches on every rocky promontory, and the tall spires of the dark pines and hemlock.

Over this mass of many-colored foliage, the pale thin yellow light of the new-risen sun was pouring down a flood of chaste illumination; while, exhaled from the waters by his first beams, a silvery gauze-like haze floated along the shores, not rising to the height of ten feet from the limped surface, which lay unbroken by the smallest ripple, undisturbed by the slightest splash of fish or insect, as still and tranquil to the eye as though it had been one huge plate of beaten burnished silver; with the tall cones of the gorgeous hills in all their rich variety, in all their clear minuteness, reflected, summit downward, palpable as their reality, in that most perfect mirror.

Such was the scene on which I gazed, as on the last day of our sojourn in the Woodlands of fair Orange, I issued from the little cabin, under the roof of which I had slept so dreamlessly and deep, after the fierce excitement of our deer hunt, that while I was yet slumbering, all save myself had risen, donned their accoutrements, and sallied forth, I knew not whither, leaving me certainly alone, although as certainly not so much to my glory.

From the other cottage, as I stood upon the threshold, I might hear the voices of the females, busy at their culinary labors, the speedily approaching term of which was obviously denoted by the rich savory steams which tainted—not, I confess, unpleasantly—the fragrant morning air.

As I looked out upon this lovely morning, I did not, I acknowledge it, regret the absence of my excellent though boisterous companions; for there was something which I cannot define in the deep stillness, in the sweet harmonious quiet of the whole scene before me, that disposed my spirit to meditation far more than to mirth; the very smoke which rose from the low chimneys of the Teachmans' colony—not surging to and fro, obedient to the fickle winds—but soaring straight, tall, unbroken, upward, like Corinthian columns, each with its curled capital—seemed to invite the soul of the spectator to mount with it toward the sunny heavens.

By-and-bye I strayed downward to the beach, a narrow strip of silvery sand and variegated pebbles, and stood there long, silently watching the unknown sports, the seemingly—to us at

least—unmeaning movements, and strange groupings of the small fry, which darted to and fro in the clear shallows within two yards of my feet; or marking the brief circling ripples, wrought by the morning swallow's wing, and momentarily subsiding into the wonted rest of the calm lake.

How long I stood there musing I know not, for I had fallen into a train of thought so deep that I was utterly unconscious of everything around me, when I was suddenly aroused from my reverie by the quick dash of oars, and by a volley of some seven barrels discharged in quick succession. As I looked up with an air, I presume somewhat bewildered, I heard the loud and bellowing laugh of Tom, and saw the whole of our stout company gliding up in two boats, the skiff and the canoe, toward the landing place, perhaps a hundred yards from the spot where I stood.

"Come here, darn you," were the first words I heard, from the mouth of what speaker it need not be said—"come here, you lazy, snortin, snoozin Decker—lend a hand here right stret away, will you? We've got more perch than all of us can carry—and Archer's got six wood-duck."

Hurrying down in obedience to this unceremonious mandate, I perceived that indeed their time had not been misemployed, for the whole bottom of the larger boat was heaped with fish—the small and delicate green perch, the cat-fish, hideous in its natural, but most delicious in its artificial shape, and, above all, the large and broad-backed yellow bass, from two to four pounds weight. While Archer, who had gone forth with Garry only in the canoe, had picked up half a dozen wood-duck, two or three of the large yellow-legs, a little bittern, known by a far less elegant appellative throughout the country, and thirteen English snipe.

"By Jove!" cried I, "but this is something like—where the deuce did you pick the snipe up, Harry—and, above all, why the deuce did you let me lie wallowing in bed this lovely morning?"

"One question at a time," responded he, "good Master Frank; one question at a time. For the snipe, I found them very unexpectedly, I tell you, in a bit of marshy meadow just at the outlet of the pond. Garry was paddling me along at the top of his pace, after a wing-tipped wood-duck, when up jumped one of the long-billed rascals, and had the impudence to skim across the creek under my very nose—'skeap! skeap!' Well,

I dropped him, you may be sure, with a charge, too, of duck shot; and he fell some ten yards over on the meadow; so leaving Garry to pursue the drake, I landed, loaded my gun with No. 9, and went to work—the result as you see; but I cleared the meadow—devil a bird is left there, except one I cut to pieces, and could not find for want of Chase—two went away without a shot, over the hills and far away. As for letting you lie in bed, you must talk to Tom about it; I bid him call you, and the fat rascal never did so, and never said a word about you, till we were ready for a start, and then no Master Frank was to the fore.”

“Well, Tom,” cried I, “what have you got to say to this?”

“Now, cuss you, don’t come foolin’ about me,” replied that worthy, aiming a blow at me, which, had it taken place, might well have felled Goliath; but which, as I sprang aside, wasting its energies on the impassive air, had well nigh floored the striker. “Don’t you come foolin’ about me—you knows right well I called you, and you knows, too, you almost cried, and told me to clear out, and let you git an hour’s sleep; for by the Lord you thought Archer and I was made of steel!—you couldn’t and you wouldn’t—and now you wants to know the reason why you warn’t along with us!”

“Never mind the old thief, Frank,” said Archer, seeing that I was on the point of answering, “even his own aunt says he is the most notorious liar in all Orange county—and Heaven forbid we should gainsay that most respectable old lady!”

Into what violent asseveration our host would have plunged at this declaration, remains, like the tale of Cambuscan bold, veiled in deep mystery; for as he started from the log on which he had been reposing while in the act of unsplicing his bamboo fishing pole, the elder of the Teachmans thrust his head out of the cabin nearest to us—“Come, boys, to breakfast!”—and at the first word of his welcome voice, Tom made, as he would have himself defined it, stret tracks for the table. And a mighty different table it was from that to which we had sat down on the preceding morning. Timothy—unscared by the wonder of the mountain nymphs, who deemed a being of the masculine gender as an intruder, scarce to be tolerated, on the mysteries of the culinary art—had exerted his whole skill, and brought forth all the contents of his canteen! We had a superb steak of the fattest venison, graced by cranberries stewed with cayenne pepper, and sliced lemons. A pot of excellent

black tea, almost as strong as the cognac which flanked it; a dish of beautiful fried perch, with cream as thick as porridge, our own loaf sugar, and Teachman's new laid eggs, hot wheaten cakes, and hissing rashers of right tender pork, furnished a breakfast forth that might have vied successfully with those which called forth, in the Hebrides, such raptures from the lexicographer.

Breakfast despatched—for which, to say the truth, Harry gave us but little time—we mustered our array and started; Harry and Tom and I making one party, with the spaniels—Garry, the Teachmans, and Timothy, with the setters, which would hunt very willingly for him in Archer's absence, forming a second. It was scarce eight o'clock when we went out, each on a separate beat, having arranged our routes so as to meet at one o'clock in the great swamp, said to abound, beyond all other places, in the ruffed grouse or partridge, to the pursuit of which especially we had devoted our last day.

“Now, Frank,” said Harry, “you have done right well throughout the week; and if you can stand this day's tramp, I will say for you that you are a sportsman, aye, every inch of one. We have got seven miles right hard walking over the roughest hills you ever saw—the hardest moors of Yorkshire are nothing to them—before we reach the swamp, and that you'll find a settler! Tom, here, will keep along the bottoms, workings his way as best he can; while we make good the uplands! Are your flasks full?”

“Sartain, they are!” cried Tom—“and I've got a rousin big black bottle, too—but not a drop of the old cider sperrits do you git this day, boys; not if your thirsty throats were crackin' for it!”

“Well, well! we won't bother you—you'll need it all, old porpoise, before you get to the far end. Here, take a hard boiled egg or two, Frank, and some salt, and I'll pocket a few biscuits—we must depend on ourselves to-day.”

“Ay, ay, Sur,” chuckled Timothy, “there's naw Tim Matlock to mak looncheon ready for ye 'a the day. See thee, measter Frank. Ay'se gotten 't measter's single barrel; and gin I dunna ootshoot measter Draa—whoy Ay'se deny my coountry!”

“Most certainly you will deny it then, Tim,” answered I, “for Mr. Draw shoots excellently well, and you ——”

“And Ay'se shot mony a hare by 't braw moon, doon i'

bonny Jawoods. Ay'se beat, Ay'se oophaud* it!" So saying, he shouldered the long single barrel, and paddled off with the most extraordinary expedition after the Teachmans, who had already started, leading the setters in a leash, till they were out of sight of Archer.

"They have the longest way to go," said Harry, "by a mile at the least; so we have time for a cheroot before we three get under way."

Cigars were instantly produced and lighted, and we lounged about the little court for the best part of half an hour, till the report of a distant gunshot, ringing with almost innumerable reverberations along the woodland shores, announced to us that our companions had already got into their work.

"Here goes," cried Harry, springing to his feet at once, and grasping his good gun; "here goes—they have got into the long hollow, Tom, and by the time we've crossed the ridge, and got upon our ground, they'll be abreast of us."

"Hold on! hold on!" Tom bellowed, "you are the darndest critter, when you do git goin—now hold on, do—I wants some rum, and Forester here looks a kind of white about the gills, his what-d'ye-call, *cheroot*, has made him sick, I reckon!"

Of course, with such an exhortation in our ears as this, it was impossible to do otherwise than wet our whistles with one drop of the old Ferintosh; and then, Tom having once again recovered his good humor, away we went, and "climb the high hill," though we "swam not the deep river," as merrily as ever sportsman did, from the days of Arbalast and Longbow, down to these times of Westley Richards' caps and Eley's wire cartridges.

A tramp of fifteen minutes through some scrubby brushwood, brought us to the base of a steep stony ridge covered with tall and thrifty hickories and a few oaks and maples intermixed, rising so steeply from the shore that it was necessary not only to strain every nerve of the leg, but to swing our bodies up from tree to tree, by dint of hand. It was indeed a hard and heavy tug; and I had pretty tough work, what between the exertion of the ascent, and the incessant fits of laughter into which I was thrown by the grotesquely agile movements of fat Tom; who, grunting, panting, sputtering, and launching forth from time to time the strangest and most blasphemously horrid

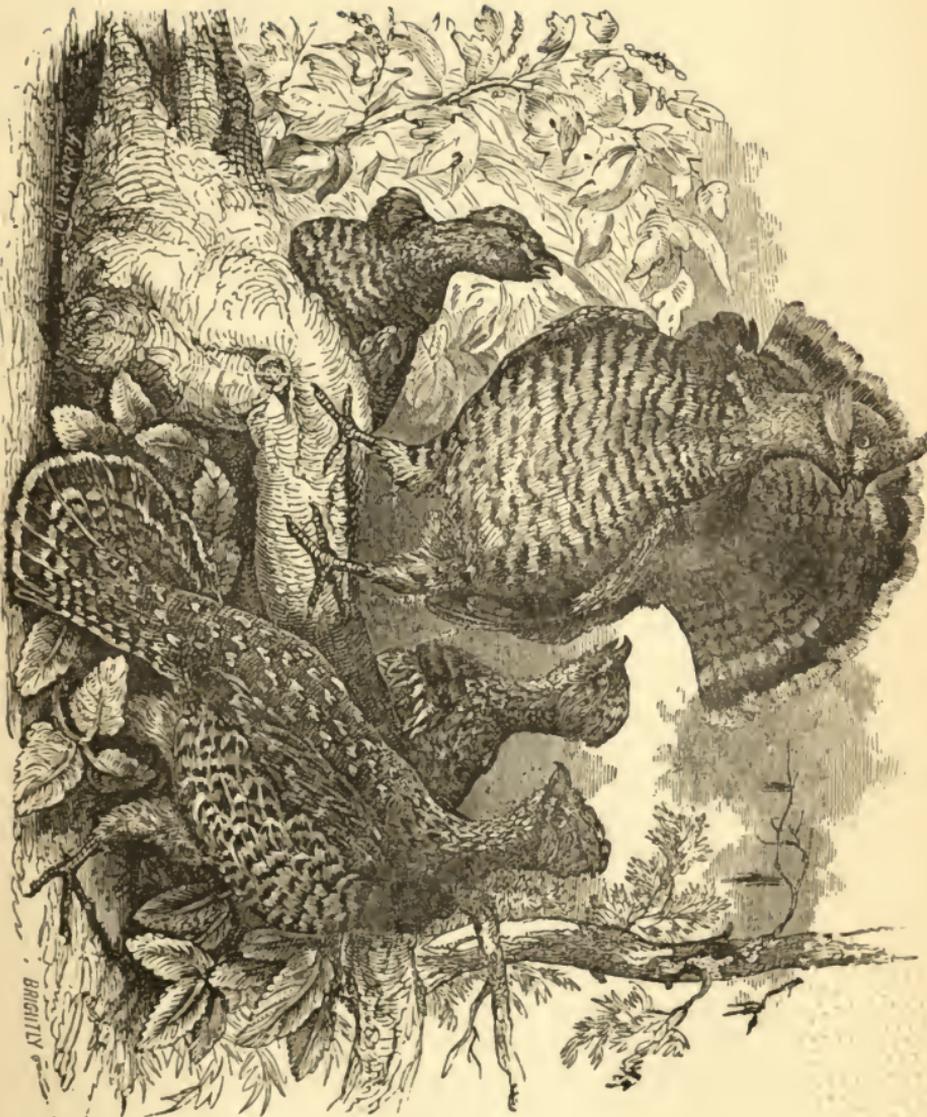
* Oophaud, Yorkshire. Anglice, uphold.

oaths, contrived to make way to the summit faster than either of us—crashing through the dense underwood of juniper and sumach, uprooting the oak saplings as he swung from this to that, and spurning down huge stones upon us, as we followed at a cautious distance. When we at last crowned the ridge, we found him, just as Harry had predicted, stretched in a half-recumbent attitude, leaning against a huge gray stone, with his fir cap and double-barrel lying upon the withered leaves beside him, puffing, as Archer told him, to his mighty indignation, like a great grampus in shoal water.

After a little rest, however, Falstaff revived, though not before he had imbibed about a pint of applejack, an occupation in which he could not persuade either of us, this time, to join him. Descending from our elevated perch, we now got into a deep glen, with a small brooklet winding along the bottom, bordered on either hand by a stripe of marshy bog earth, bearing a low growth of alder bushes, mixed with stunted willows. On the side opposite to that by which we had descended, the hill rose long and lofty, covered with mighty timber-trees standing in open ranks and overshadowing a rugged and unequal surface, covered with whortleberry, wintergreen, and cranberries, the latter growing only along the courses of the little runnels, which channelled the whole slope. Here, stony ledges and gray broken crags peered through the underwood, among the crevices of which the stunted cedars stood thick set, and matted with a thousand creeping vines and brambles; while there, from some small marshy basin, the giant *Rhododendron Maximum* rose almost to the height of a timber tree.

“Here, Tom,” said Harry, “keep you along this run—you’ll have a woodcock every here and there, and look sharp when you hear them fire over the ridge, for they can’t shoot to speak of, and the ruffed grouse will cross—you know. You, master Frank, stretch your long legs and get three parts of the way up this hill—over the second mound—there, do you see that great blue stone with a thunder-splintered tree beside it? just beyond that! then turn due west, and mark the trending of the valley, keeping a little way ahead of me, which you will find quite easy, for I shall have to beat across you both. Go very slow, Tom—now, hurrah!”

Exhorted thus, I bounded up the hill and soon reached my appointed station; but not before I heard the cheery voice of



RUFFED GROUSE.—Page 78.

“The Warwick Woodlands.”



Archer encouraging the eager spaniels—"Hie cock! hie cock! pu-r-r-h!"—till the woods rang to the clear shout.

Scarce had I reached the top, before, as I looked down into the glen below me, a puff of white smoke, instantly succeeded by a second, and the loud full reports of both his barrels from among the green-leaved alders, showed me that Tom had sprung game. The next second I heard the sharp questing of the spaniel Dan, followed by Harry's "Charge!—down Cha-arge, you little thief—down to cha-arge, will you!"

But it was all in vain—for on he went furious and fast, and the next moment the thick whirring of a grouse reached my excited ears. Carefully, eagerly, I gazed out to mark the wary bird; but the discharge of Harry's piece assured me, as I thought, that further watch was needless; and stupidly enough I dropped the muzzle of my gun.

Just at the self-same point of time—"Mark! mark, Frank!" shouted Archer, "mark! there are a brace of them!"—and as he spoke, gliding with speed scarcely inferior to a bullet's flight upon their balanced pinions, the noble birds swept past me, so close that I could have struck them with a riding whip.

Awfully fluttered was I—I confess—but by a species of involuntary and instinctive consideration I rallied instantly, and became cool. The grouse had seen me, and wheeled diverse; one darting to the right, through a small opening between a cedar bush and a tall hemlock—the other skimming through the open oak woods a little toward the left.

At such a crisis thought comes in a second's space; and I have often fancied that in times of emergency or great surprise, a man deliberates more promptly, and more prudently withal, than when he has full time to let his second thought trench on his first and mar it. So was it in this case with me. At half a glance I saw, that if I meant to get both birds, the right-hand fugitive must be the first, and that with all due speed; for but a few yards further he would have gained a brake which would have laughed to scorn Lord Kennedy or Harry T——r.

Pitching my gun up to my shoulder, both barrels loaded with Eley's *red* wire cartridge No. 6, I gave him a snap shot, and had the satisfaction of seeing him keeled well over, not wing-tipped or leg-broken, but fairly riddled by the concentrated charge of something within thirty yards. Turning as quick as light, I caught a fleet sight of the other, which by a rapid zig-zag was now flying full across my front, certainly *o. et*

forty-five yards distant, among a growth of thick-set saplings—the hardest shot, in my opinion, that can be selected to test a quick and steady sportsman. I gave it him, and down he came too—killed dead—that I knew, for I had shot full half a yard before him. Just as I dropped my butt to load, the hill began to echo with the vociferous yells of master Dan, the quick redoubled cracks of Harry's heavy dog-whip, and his incessant rating—"Down, cha-arge! For sha-ame! Dan! Dan! down cha-arge! for sha-ame!"—broken at times by the impatient oaths of Tom Draw, in the gully, who had, it seems, knocked down two woodcock, neither of which he could bag, owing to the depth and instability of the wet bog.

"Quit! quit! cuss you, quit there, leatherin that brute! Quit, I say, or I'll send a shot at you! Come here, Archer—I say, come here!—there be the darndest lot of droppins here, I ever see—full twenty cock, I swon!"

But still the scourge continued to resound, and still the raving of the spaniel excited Tom's hot ire.

"Frank Forester!" exclaimed he once again. "Do see now—Harry *missed* them partridge, and so he licks the poor dumb brute for it. I wish I were a spannel, and he'd try it on with me!"

"I will, too," answered Archer, with a laugh; "I will, too, if you wish it, though you are not a spaniel, nor any thing else half so good. And why, pray, should I not scourge this wild little imp? he ran slap into the best pack of ruffed grouse I have seen this two years—fifteen or sixteen birds. I wonder they're not scattered—it's full late to find them packed!"

"Did you kill ere a one?" Tom holloaed; "not one, either of you!"

"I did," answered Harry, "I nailed the old cock bird, and a rare dog he is!—two pounds, good weight, I warrant him," he added, weighing him as he spoke. "Look at the crimson round his eye, Frank, like a cock pheasant's, and his black ruff or tippet—by George! but he's a beauty! And what did you do?" he continued.

"I bagged a brace—the only two that crossed me."

"Did you, though?" exclaimed Archer, with no small expression of surprise; "did you, though?—that's prime work—it takes a thorough workman to bag a double shot upon October grouse. But come, we must go down to Tom; hark how the old hound keeps bawliug."

Well, down we went. The spaniels quickly retrieved his dead birds, and flushed some fifteen more, of which we gave a clean account—Harry making up for lost time by killing six cock, right and left, almost before they topped the bushes—seven more fell to me, but single birds all of them—and but one brace to Tom, who now began to wax indignant; for Archer, as I saw, for fun's sake, was making it a point to cut down every bird that rose to him, before he could get up his gun; and then laughed at him for being fat and slow. But the laugh was on Tom's side before long—for while we were yet in the valley, the report of a gun came faintly down the wind from beyond the hill, and as we all looked out attentively, a grouse skimmed the brow, flying before the wind at a tremendous pace, and skated across the valley without stooping from his altitude. I stood the first, and fired, a yard at least ahead of him—on he went, unharmed and undaunted; bang went my second barrel—still on he went, the faster, as it seemed, for the weak insult.

Harry came next, and he too fired twice, and—tell it not in Gath—missed *twice!* “Now, Fat-Guts!” shouted Archer, not altogether in his most amiable or pleasing tones; and sure enough up went the old man's piece—roundly it echoed with its mighty charge—a cloud of feathers drifted away in a long line from the slaughtered victim—which fell not direct, so rapid was its previous flight, but darted onward in a long declining tangent, and struck the rocky soil with a thud clearly audible where we stood, full a hundred yards from the spot where it fell.

He bagged, amid Tom's mighty exultation, forward again we went and in a short half hour got into the remainder of the pack which we had flushed before, in some low tangled thorn cover, among which they lay well, and we made havoc of them. And here the oddest accident I ever witnessed in the field took place—so odd, that I am half ashamed to write to it—but where's the odds, for it is true.

A fine cock bird was flushed close at Tom's feet, and went off to the left, Harry and I both standing to the right; he blazed away, and at the shot the bird sprung up six or eight feet into the air, with a sharp staggering flutter. “Killed dead!” cried I; “well done again, Fat Tom.” But to my great surprise the grouse gathered wing, and flew on, feebly at first, and dizzily, but gaining strength more and more as he went on the farther. At the last, after a long flight, he treed in a tall leafless pine.

“Run after him, Frank,” Archer called to me, “you are the lightest; and we’ll beat up the swale till you return. You saw the tree he took?”

“Aye, aye!” said I preparing to make off.

“Well! he sits near the top—now mind me! no chivalry Frank! give him no second chance—a ruffed grouse, darting downward from a tall pine tree, is a shot to balk the devil—it’s full five to one that you shoot over and behind him—give him no mercy!”

Off I went, and after a brisk trot, five or six minutes long, reached my tree, saw my bird perched on a broken limb close to the time-blanchéd trunk, cocked my Joe Manton, and was in the very act of taking aim, when something so peculiar in the motion of the bird attracted me, that I paused. He was nodding like a sleepy man, and seemed with difficulty to retain his foothold. While I was gazing, he let go, pitched headlong, fluttered his wings in the death-struggle, yet in air, and struck the ground close at my feet, stone-dead. Tom’s first shot had cut off the whole crown of the head, with half the brain and the right eye; and after that the bird had power to fly five or six hundred yards, and then to cling upon its perch for at least ten minutes.

Rejoining my companions, we again went onward, slaying and bagging as we went, till when the sun was at meridian we sat down beside the brook to make our frugal meal—not to-day of grilled woodcock and champagne, but of hard eggs, salt, biscuit, and Scotch whiskey—not so bad either—nor were we disinclined to profit by it. We were still smoking on the marge, when a shot right ahead told us that our out-skirting party was at hand.

All in an instant were on the alert; in twenty minutes we joined forces, and compared results. We had twelve grouse, five rabbits, seventeen woodcock; they, six gray squirrels, seven grouse, and one solitary cock—Tim, proud as Lucifer at having led the field. But his joy now was at an end—for to his charge the setters were committed to be led in leash, while we shot on, over the spaniels. Another dozen grouse, and eighteen rabbits, completed our last bag in the Woodlands.

Late was it when we reached the Teachmans’ hut—and long and deep was the carouse that followed; and when the moon had sunk and we were turning in, Tom Draw swore with a mighty oath of deepest emphasis—that since we had passed a

week with him, he'd take a seat down in the wagon, and see the Beacon Races. So we filled round once more, and clinked our glasses to bind the joyous contract, and turned in happy.

DAY THE SEVENTH.

ONCE more we were compelled to change our purpose.

When we left Tom Draw's, it had been, as we thought, finally decided that we were for this bout to visit that fair village no more, but when that worthy announced his own determination to accompany us on our homeward route, and when we had taken into consideration the fact, that, independent of Tom's two hundred and fifty weight of solid flesh, we had two noble bucks, beside quail, ruffed grouse, woodcock, and rabbit almost innumerable to transport, in addition to our two selves and Timothy, with the four dogs, and lots of luggage—when we, I say, considered all this, it became apparent that another vehicle must be provided for our return. So during the last jorum, it had been put to the vote and unanimously carried that we should start for Tom's, by a retrograde movement, at four o'clock in the morning, breakfast with him, and rig up some drag or other wherein Timothy might get the two deer and the dogs, as best he might, into the city.

"As for us," said Harry, "we will go down the other road, Tom, over the back-bone of the mountain, dine with old Colonel Beams, stop at Paterson, and take a taste at the Holy Father's poteen—you may look at the Falls if you like it, Frank, while we're looking at the Innishowen—and so get home to supper. I'll give you both beds for one night—but not an hour longer—my little cellar would be broken, past all doubt, if old Tom were to get *two* nights out of it!"

"Ay'se sure it would," responded Timothy, who had been listening, all attention, mixing meanwhile some strange compound of eggs and rum and sugar. "Whoy, measter Draa did pratty nigh drink 't out yance—that noight 'at eight chaps, measter Frank, drank oop two baskets o' champagne, and fifteen bottles o' 't breawn sherry—Ay carried six on 'em to bed, Ay'se warrant it—and yan o' them, young measter Clark, he spoilt me a new suit o' liveries, wi' vomiting a top on me,"

"That'll do, Timothy," interposed Archer, unwilling, as I thought, that the secret mysteries of his establishment should be revealed any further to the profane ears which were gaping round about us—"that'll do for the present—give Mr. Draw that flip—he's looking at it very angrily, I see! and then turn in, or you'll be late in the morning; and, by George, we must be away by four o'clock at latest, for we have all of sixty miles to make to-morrow, and Tom's fat carcass will try the springs most consumedly, down hill."

Matters thus settled, in we turned, and—as it seemed to me, within five minutes, I was awakened by Harry Archer, who stood beside my bed full dressed, with a candle in his hand.

"Get up," he whispered, "get up, Frank, very quietly; slip on your great-coat and your slippers—we have a chance to serve Tom out—he's not awake for once! and Timothy will have the horses ready in five minutes!"

Up I jumped on the instant, hauled on a rough-frieze pea-jacket, thrust my unstockinged feet into their contrary slippers, and followed Harry, on the tips of my toes, along a creaking passage, guided by the portentous ruckling snorts, which varied the profundity of the fat man's slumbers. When I reached his door, there stood Harry, laughing to himself, with a small quiet chuckle, perfectly inaudible at three feet distance, the intensity of which could, however, be judged by the manner in which it shook his whole person. Two huge horse-buckets, filled to the brim, were set beside him; and he had cut a piece of an old broomstick so as to fit exactly to the width of the passage, across which he had fastened it, at about two feet from the ground, so that it must most indubitably trip up any person, who should attempt to run along that dark and narrow thoroughfare.

"Now, Frank," said he, "see here! I'll set this bucket here behind the door—we'll heave the other slap into his face—there he lies, full on the broad of his fat back, with his mouth wide open—and when he jumps up full of fight, which he is sure to do, run you with the candle, which blow out the moment he appears, straight down the passage. I'll stand back here, and as he trips over that broomstick, which he is certain to do, I'll pitch the other bucket on his back—and if he does not think he's bewitched, I'll promise not to laugh. I owe him two or three practical jokes, and now I've got a chance, so I'll pay him all at once."

Well! we peeped in, aided by the glare of the streaming tallow candle, and there, sure enough, with all the clothes kicked off him, and his immense rotundity protected only from the cold by an exceeding scanty shirt of most ancient cotton, lay Tom, flat on his back, like a stranded porpoise, with his mouth wide open, through which he was puffing and breathing like a broken-winded cab-horse, while through his expanded nostrils he was snoring loudly enough to have awaked the seven sleepers. Neither of us could well stand up for laughing. One bucket was deposited behind the door, and back stood Harry ready to slip behind it also at half a moment's warning—the candlestick was placed upon the floor, which I was to kick over in my flight.

“Stand by to heave!” whispered my trusty comrade—“heave!” and with the word—flash!—slush!—out went the whole contents of the full pail, two gallons at the least of ice-cold water, slap in the chaps, neck, breast, and stomach of the sound sleeper. With the most wondrous noise that ears of mine have ever witnessed—a mixture of sob, snort, and groan, concluding in the longest and most portentous howl that mouth of man ever uttered—Tom started out of bed; but, at the very instant I discharged my bucket, I put my foot upon the light, flung down the empty pail, and bolted. Poor devil!—as he got upon his feet the bucket rolled up with its iron handles full against his shins, the oath he swore at which encounter, while he dashed headlong after me, directed by the noise I made on purpose, is most unmentionable. Well knowing where it was, I easily jumped over the stick which barred the passage. Not so Tom—for going at the very top of his pace, swearing like forty troopers all the time, he caught it with both legs just below the knees, and went down with a squelch that shook the whole hut to the roof-tree, while at the self-same instant Harry once again soused him with the contents of the second pail, and made his escape unobserved by the window of Tom's own chamber. Meanwhile I had reached my room, and flinging off my jacket, came running out with nothing but my shirt and a lighted candle, to Tom's assistance, in which the next moment I was joined by Harry, who rushed in from out of doors with the stable lanthorn.

“What's the row now?” he said, with his face admirably cool and quiet. “What the devil's in the wind?”

“Oh! Archer!” grunted poor Tom, in most piteous accents—

“them darned etarnal Teachmans—they’ve murdered me right out! I’ll never get over this—ugh! ugh! ugh! Half drowned and smashed up the darndest! Now aint it an etarnal shame! Cuss them, if I doos n’t sarve them out for it, my name’s not Thomas Draw!”

“Well, it is not,” rejoined Harry, “who in the name of wonder ever called you Thomas? Christened you never were at all, that’s evident enough, you barbarous old heathen—but you were certainly *named* Tom.”

Swearing, and vowing vengeance on Jem Lyn, and Garry, and the Teachmans—each one of whom, by the way, was sound asleep during this pleasant interlude—and shaking with the cold, and sputtering with uncontrollable fury, the fat man did at length get dressed, and after two or three libations of milk punch, recovered his temper somewhat, and his spirits altogether.

Although, however, Harry and I told him very frankly that we were not merely the sole planners, but the sole executors, of the trick—it was in vain we spoke. Tom would not have it.

“No—he knew—he knew well enough; did we go for to think he was such an old etarnal fool as not to know Jem’s voice—a bloody Decker—he would be the death of him.”

And direful, in good truth, I do believe, were the jokes practical, and to him no jokes at all, which poor Jem had to undergo, in expiation of his fancied share in this our misdemeanor.

Scarce had the row subsided, before the horses were announced. Harry and I, and Tom and Timothy, mounted the old green drag; and, with our cheroots lighted—the only lights, by the way, that were visible at all—off we went at a rattling trot, the horses in prime condition, full of fire, biting and snapping at each other, and making their bits clash and jingle every moment. Up the long hill, and through the shadowy wood, they strained, at full ten miles an hour, without a touch of the whip, or even a word of Harry’s well-known voice.

We reached the brow of the mountain, where there are four cleared fields—whereon I once saw snow lie five feet deep on the tenth day of April—and an old barn; and thence we looked back through the cold gray gloom of an autumnal morning, three hours at least before the rising of the sun, while the stars were waning in the dull sky, and the moon had long since set, toward the Greenwood lake.

Never was there a stronger contrast, than between that lovely

sheet of limpid water, as it lay now—cold, dun, and dismal, like a huge plate of pewter, without one glittering ripple, without one clear reflection, surrounded by the wooded hills which, swathed in a dim mist, hung grim and gloomy over its silent bosom—and its bright sunny aspect on the previous day.

Adieu! fair Greenwood Lake! adieu! Many and blithe have been the hours which I have spent around, and in, and on you—and it may well be I shall never see you more—whether reflecting the full fresh greenery of summer; or the rich tints of cisatlantic autumn; or sheeted with the treacherous ice; but never, thou sweet lake, never will thy remembrance fade from my bosom, while one drop of life-blood warms it; so art thou intertwined with memories of happy careless days, that never can return—of friends, truer, perhaps, though rude and humble, than all of prouder seeming. Farewell to thee, fair lake! Long may it be before thy rugged hills be stripped of their green garniture, or thy bright waters* marred by the unpicturesque improvements of man's avarice!—for truly thou, in this utilitarian age, and at brief distance from America's metropolis, art young, and innocent, and unpolluted, as when the red man drank of thy pure waters, long centuries ere he dreamed of the pale-faced oppressors, who have already rooted out his race from half its native continent.

Another half hour brought us down at a rattling pace to the village, and once again we pulled up at Tom's well-known dwelling, just as the day was breaking. A crowd of loiterers, as usual, was gathered even at that untimely season in the large bar-room; and when the clatter of our hoofs and wheels announced us, we found no lack of ready-handed and quick tongued assistants.

* Marred it has been long ago. A huge dam has been drawn across its outlet, in order to supply a feeder to the Morris Canal—a gigantic piece of unprofitable improvement, made, I believe, merely as a basis on which for brokers, stock-jobbers—*et id genus omne* of men too utilitarian and ambitious to be content with earning money honestly—to exercise their prodigious 'cuteness.

The effect of this has been to change the bold shores into pestilential submerged swamps, whereon the dead trees still stand, tall, gray and ghostly; to convert a number of acres of beautiful meadow-land into stagnant grassy shallows; to back up the waters at the lake's head, to the utter destruction of several fine farms; and, last not least, to create fever and ague in abundance, where no such thing had ever been heard tell of before.

Certainly! your well devised improvement is a great thing for a country!

"Take out the horses, Timothy," cried Harry, "unharness them, and rub them down as quickly and as thoroughly as may be—let them have four quarts each, and mind that all is ready for a start before an hour. Meantime, Frank, we will overhaul the game, get breakfast, and hunt up a wagon for the deer and setters."

"Don't bother yourself about no wagon," interposed Tom, "but come you in and liquor, else we shall have you grunting half the day; and if old roan and my long pig-box wont carry down the deer, why I'll stand treat."

A jorum was prepared, and discussed accordingly; fresh ice produced, the quail and woodcock carefully unpacked, and instantly re-stowed with clean straw, a measure which, however, seemed almost supererogatory, since so completely had the external air been excluded from the game-box, that we found not only the lumps of ice in the bottom unthawed, but the flannel which lay over it stiff frozen; the birds were of course perfectly fresh, cool, and in good condition. Our last day's batch, which it was found impossible to get into the box, with all the ruffed grouse, fifty at least in number, were tied up by the feet, two brace and two brace, and hung in festoons round the inside rails of the front seat and body, while about thirty hares dangled by their hind legs, with their long ears flapping to and fro, from the back seat and baggage rack. The wagon looked, I scarce know how, something between an English stage-coach when the merry days of Christmas are at hand, and a game-hunter's taxed cart.

The business of re-packing had been scarce accomplished, and Harry and myself had just retired to change our shooting-jackets and coarse fustians for habiliments more suitable for the day and our destination—New York, to-wit, and Sunday—when forth came Tom, bedizened from top to toe in his most new and knowing rig, and looking now, to do him justice, a most respectable and portly yeoman.

A broad-brimmed, low-crowned, and long-napped white hat, set forth assuredly to the best advantage his rotund, rubicund, good-humored phiz; a clean white handkerchief circled his sturdy neck, on the voluminous folds of which reposed in placid dignity the mighty collops of his double chin. A bright canary waistcoat of imported kerseymere, with vast mother-of-pearl buttons, and a broad-skirted coat of bright blue cloth, with glittering brass buttons half the size of dollars, covered his upper

man, while loose drab trousers of stout double-milled, and a pair of well-blacked boots, completed his attire; so that he looked as different an animal as possible, from the unwashed, uncombed, half-naked creature he presented, when lounging in his bar-room in his every-day apparel.

"Why, halloa, Guts!" cried Archer, as he entered, "you've broken out here in a new place altogether."

"Now quit, you, callin of me Guts," responded Tom, more testily than I had ever heard him speak to Harry, whose every whim and frolic he seemed religiously to venerate and humor; "a fellow doesn't want to have it 'Guts' here, and 'Guts' there, over half a county. Why, now, it was but a week since, while 'lections was a goin' on, I got a letter from some d—d chaps to Newburg—'Rouse about now, old Guts, you'll need it this election?'"

"Ha! ha! ha!" shouted Harry and I almost simultaneously, delighted at Tom's evident annoyance.

"Who wrote it, Tom?"

"That's what I'd jist give fifty dollars to know now," replied mine host, clinching his mighty paw.

"Why, what would you do," said I, "if you did know?"

"Lick him, by George! Lick him, in the first place, till he was as nigh dead as I daared lick him—and then I'd make him eat up every darned line of it! But come, come—breakfast's ready; and while we're getting through with it, Timothy and Jem Lyn will fix the pig-box, and make the deer all right and tight for travelling!"

No sooner said than done—an ample meal was speedily despatched—and when that worthy came in to announce all ready, for the saving of time, master Timothy was accommodated with a seat at a side-table, which he occupied with becoming dignity, abstaining, as it were, in consciousness of his honorable promotion, from any of the quaint and curious witticisms, in which he was wont to indulge; but manducating, with vast energy, the various good things which were set before him.

It was a clear, bright Sabbath morning, as ever shone down on a sinful world, on which we started homeward—and, though I fear there was not quite so much solemnity in our demeanor as might have best accorded with the notions of over strict professors, I can still answer that, with much mirth, much merriment, and much good feeling in our hearts, there was no touch of irreverence, or any taint of what could be called sinful thought.

The sun had risen fairly, but the hour was still too early for the sweet peaceful music of the church-going bells to have made their echoes tunable through the rich valley. A merry cavalcade, indeed, we started—Harry leading the way at his usual slap-dash pace, so that one, less a workman than himself, would have said he went up hill and down at the same break-neck pace, and would take all the grit out of his team before he had gone ten miles—while a more accurate observer would have seen, at a glance, that he varied his rate at almost every inequality of road, that he quartered every rut, avoided every jog or mud-hole, husbanded for the very best his horses' strength, never making them either pull or hold a moment longer than was absolutely necessary from the abruptness of the ground.

At his left hand sat I, while Tom, in honor of his superior bulk and weight, occupied with his magnificent and portly person the whole of the back seat, keeping his countenance as sanctified as possible, and nodding, with some quaint and characteristic observation, to each one of the scattered groups of country-people, which we encountered every quarter of a mile for the first hour of our route, wending their way toward the village church—but, when we reached the forest-mantled road which clombe the mountain, making the arched woods resound to many a jovial catch or merry hunting chorus.

Mounted sublime on an arm-chair lashed to the forepart of the pig-box, sat Timothy in state—his legs well muffled in a noble scarlet-fringed buffalo skin, and his body encased in his livery top-coat—the setters and the spaniels crouching most meekly at his feet, and the two noble bucks—the fellow on whose steaks we had already made an inroad, having been left as fat Tom's portion—securely corded down upon a pile of straw, with their sublime and antlered crests drooping all spiritless and humble over the backboard, toward the frozen soil which crashed and rattled under the ponderous hoofs of the magnificent roan horse—Tom's special favorite—which, though full seventeen hands high, and heavy in proportion, yet showing a good strain of blood, trotted away with his huge load at full ten miles an hour.

Plunging into the deep recesses of the Greenwoods, hill after hill we scaled, a toilsome length of stony steep ascents, almost precipitous, until we reached the back-bone of the mountain ridge—a rugged, bare, sharp edge of granite rock, without a particle of soil upon it, diving down at an angle not much less

than forty-five degrees into a deep ravine, through which thundered and roared a flashing torrent. This fearful descent overpast, and that in perfect safety, we rolled merrily away down hill, till we reached Colonel Beam's tavern, a neat, low-browed, Dutch, stone farm-house, situate in an angle scooped out of a green hill-side, with half a dozen tall and shadowy elms before it—a bright crystal stream purling along into the horse-trough through a miniature aqueduct of hollowed logs, and a clear cold spring in front of it, with half a score of fat and lazy trout floating in its transparent waters.

A hearty welcome, and a no less hearty meal having been here encountered and despatched, we rattled off again, through laden orchards and rich meadows; passed the confluence of the three bright rivers which issue from their three mountain gorges, to form, by their junction, the fairest of New Jersey's rivers, the broad Passaic; reached the small village noted for rum-drinking and quarter racing—high Pompton—thence by the Preakness mountain, and Mose Canouze's tavern—whereat, in honor of Tom's friend, a worthy of the self-same kidney with himself, we paused awhile—to Paterson, the filthiest town, situate on one of the loveliest rivers in the world, and famous only for the possession, in the person of its Catholic priest, of the finest scholar and best fellow in America, whom we unluckily found not at home, and therefore tasted not, according to friend Harry's promise, the splendid Innishowen which graces at all times his hospitable board.

Eight o'clock brought us to Hoboken, where, by good luck, the ferry boat lay ready—and nine o'clock had not struck when we three sat down once again about a neat small supper-table, before a bright coal fire, in Archer's snuggerly—Tom glorying in the prospect of the races on the morrow, and I regretting that I had brought to its conclusion

THE WARWICK WOODLANDS

ON A SECOND VISIT.

THE WAYSIDE INN.

ON a still clear October evening, Frank Forester and Harry Archer were sitting at the open window of a neat country tavern, in a sequestered nook of Rockland County, looking out upon as beautiful a view as ever gladdened the eyes of wandering amateur or artist.

The house was a large old-fashioned stone mansion, certainly not of later date than the commencement of the revolution; and probably had been, in its better days, the manor-house of some considerable proprietor—the windows were of a form very unusual in the States, opening like doors, with heavy wooden mullions and small lattices, while the walls were so thick as to form a deep embrasure, provided with a cushioned window-seat; the parlor, in which the friends had taken up their temporary domicile, contained two of these pleasant lounges, the larger looking out due south upon the little garden, with the road before it, and, beyond the road, a prospect, of which more anon—the other commanding a space of smooth green turf in front of the stables, whereon our old acquaintance, Timothy, was leading to and fro a pair of smoking horses. The dark-green drag, with all its winter furniture of gaily decorated bearskins, stood half-seen beneath the low-arched wagon-shed.

The walls of the room—the *best* room of the tavern—were pannelled with the dark glossy wood of the black cherry, and a huge mantel-piece of the same material, took up at least one half of the side opposite the larger window, while on the hearth below reposed a glowing bed of red-hot hickory ashes, a foot at least in depth, a huge log of that glorious fuel blazing upon the massive andirons. Two large, deep gun-cases, a leather

magazine of shot, and sundry canisters of diamond gunpowder, Brough's, were displayed on a long table under the end window—a four-horse whip, and two fly-rods in India-rubber cases, stood in the chimney-corner; while revelling in the luxurious warmth of the piled hearth lay basking on the rug, three exquisitely formed Blenheim spaniels of the large breed—short-legged and bony, with ears that almost swept the ground as they stood upright, and coats as soft and lustrous as floss silk.

On a round table, which should have occupied the centre of the parlor, now pulled up to the window-seat, whereon reclined the worthies, stood a large pitcher of iced water; a square case-bottle of cut crystal filled, as the flavor which pervaded the whole room sufficiently demonstrated, with superb old Antigua Shrub; several large rummers corresponding to the fashion of the bottle; a twisted taper of green wax, and a small silver plate with six or eight cheroots, real manillas.

Supper was evidently over, and the friends, amply feasted, were now luxuriating in the delicious indolence, half-dozing, half-day-dreaming, of a calm sleepy smoke, modestly lubricated by an occasional sip of the cool beverage before them. If we except a pile of box-coats, capes, and macintoshes of every cut and color—a travelling liquor-case which, standing open, displayed the tops of three more bottles similar to that on the table, and spaces lined with velvet for all the glass in use—and another little leathern box, which, like the liquor-case, showed its contents of several silver plates, knives, forks, spoons, flasks of sauce, and condiments of different kinds—the whole interior, as a painter would have called it, has been depicted with all accuracy.

Without, the view on which the windows opened was indeed most lovely. The day had been very bright and calm; there was not a single cloud in the pale transparent heaven, and the sun, which had shone cheerfully all day from his first rising in the east, till now when he was hanging like a ball of bloody fire in the thin filmy haze which curtained the horizon, was still shooting his long rays, and casting many a shadow over the slopes and hollows which diversified the scene.

Immediately across the road lay a rich velvet meadow, luxuriant still and green—for the preceding month had been rather wet, and frost had not set in to nip its verdure—sloping down southerly to a broad shallow trout-stream, which rippled ail

glittering and bright over a pebbly bed, although the margin on the hither side was somewhat swampy, with tufts of willows and bushes of dark alder fringing it here and there, and dipping their branches in its waters—the farther bank was skirted by a tall grove of maple, hickory, and oak, with a thick undergrowth of sumach arrayed in all the gorgeous garniture of autumn, purples and brilliant scarlets and chrome yellows, mixed and harmonized with the dark copper foliage of a few sere beeches, and the gray trunks apparent here and there through the thin screen of the fast falling leaves.

Beyond this grove, the bank rose bold and rich in swelling curves, with a fine corn-field, topped already to admit every sunbeam to the ripening ears. A buckwheat stubble, conspicuous by its deep ruddy hue, and two or three brown pastures divided by high fences, along the lines of which flourished a copious growth of cat-briers and sumachs, with here and there a goodly tree waving above them, made up the centre of the picture. Beyond this cultured knoll there seemed to be a deep pitch of the land clothed with a hanging wood of heavy timber; and, above this again, the soil surged upward into a huge and round-topped hill, with several golden stubbles, shining out from the frame-work of primeval forest, which, dark with many a mighty pine, covered the mountain to the top, except where at its western edge it showed a huge and rifted precipice of rock.

To the right, looking down the stream, the hills closed in quite to the water's brink on the far side, rough and uncultivated, with many a blue and misty peak discovered through the gaps in their bold, broken outline, and a broad, lake-like sheet, as calm and brightly pictured as a mirror, reflecting their inverted beauties so wondrously distinct and vivid, that the amazed eye might not recognise the parting between reality and shadow. An old gray mill, deeply embosomed in a clump of weeping willows, still verdant, though the woods were sere and waxing leafless, explained the nature of that tranquil pool, while, beyond that, the hills swept down from the rear of the building, which contained the parlor whence the two sportsmen gazed, and seemed entirely to bar the valley, so suddenly, and in so short a curve, did it wind round their western shoulder. To the left hand, the view was closed by a thick belt of second growth, through which the sandy road and glittering stream wandered away together on their mazy path, and over which

the summits of yet loftier and more rugged steeps towered heavenward.

Over this valley they had for some time gazed in silence, till now the broad sun sank behind the mountains, and the shrill whistle of the quail, which had been momentarily audible during the whole afternoon, ceased suddenly; four or five night-hawks might be seen wheeling high in pursuit of their insect prey through the thin atmosphere, and the sharp chirrup of a solitary katydid, the last of its summer tribe, was the only sound that interrupted the faint rush of the rapid stream, which came more clearly on the ear now that the louder noises of busy babbling daylight had yielded to the stillness of approaching night. Before long a bright gleam shot through the tufted outline of a dark wooded hill, and shortly after, just when a gray and misty shadow had settled down upon the half-seen landscape, the broad full moon came soaring up above the tree-tops, pouring her soft and silver radiance over the lovely valley, and investing its rare beauties with something of romance—a sentiment which belongs not to the gay, gaudy sunshine.

Just at this moment, while neither of the friends felt much inclined to talk, the door opened suddenly, and Timothy's black head was thrust in, with a query if "they didn't need t' waax candles?"

"Not yet, Tim," answered Archer, "not yet for an hour or so—but hold a minute—how have the horses fed?"

"T'ould gray drayed off directly, and he's gane tull t' loike bricks—but t' bay's no but sillyish—he keeps a breaking out again for iver—and sae Ay'se give him a hot maash enow!"

"That's right. I saw he wasn't quite up to the mark the last ten miles or so. If he don't dry off now, give him a cordial ball out of the tool-chest—one of the number 3—camphire and cardanums and ginger; a clove of garlic, and treacle *quantum suff*: hey, Frank, that will set him to rights, I warrant it. Now have you dined yourself, or supped, as the good people here insist on calling it?"

"Weel Ay wot, have I, sur," responded Timothy; "an hou. agone and better."

"Exactly; then step out yourself into the kitchen, and make us a good cup of our own coffee, strong and hot, do you see? and when that's done, bring it in with the candles; and, hark you, run up to the bed-room and bring my netting needles down, and the ball of silk twist, and the front of that new

game-bag, I began the other night. If you were not as lazy as possible, friend Frank, you would bring your fly-book out, when the light comes, and tie some hackles."

"Perhaps I may, when the light comes," Forester answered; "but I'm in no hurry for it; I like of all things to look out, and watch the changes of the night over a landscape even less beautiful than this. One half the pleasures of field sports to me, is other than the mere excitement. If there were nothing out the eagerness of the pursuit, and the gratification of successful vanity, fond as I am of shooting, I should, I believe, have long since wearied of it; but there are so many other things connected with it—the wandering among the loveliest scenery—the full enjoyment of the sweetest weather—the learning the innumerable and all-wondrous attributes and instincts of animated nature—all these are what make up to me the rapture I derive from woodcraft! Why, such a scene as this—a scene which how few, save the vagrant sportsman, or the countryman who but rarely appreciates the picturesque, have ever witnessed—is enough, with the pure and tranquil thoughts it calls up in the heart, to plead a trumpet-tongued apology, for all the vanity, and uselessness, and cruelty, and what not, so constantly alleged against our field sports."

"Oh! yes," cried Harry; "yes, indeed, Frank, I perfectly agree with you. But all that last is mere humbug—humbug, too, of the lowest and most foolish order—I never hear a man droning about the cruelty of field sports, but I set him down, on the spot, either as a hypocrite or a fool, and probably a glorious union of the two. When man can exist without killing myriads of animals with every breath of vital air he draws, with every draught of water he imbibes, with every footstep he prints upon the turf or gravel of his garden—when he abstains from every sort of animal food—and, above all, when he abstains from his great pursuit of torturing his fellow men—then let him prate, if he will, of sportsmen's cruelty."

"For show me one trade, one profession, wherein one man's success is not based upon another's failure; all rivalry, all competition, triumph and rapture to the winner, disgrace and anguish to the loser! And then these fellows, fattened on widows' tears and orphans' misery, preach you pure homilies about the cruelty of taking life. But you are quite right about the combination of pleasures—the excitement, too, of quick motion through the fresh air—the sense of liberty amid wide plains, or

tangled woods, or on the wild hill tops—this, surely, to the reflective sportsman—and who can be a true sportsman, and not reflective—is the great charm of his pursuit.”

“And do you not think that this pleasure exists in a higher degree here in America than in our own England?”

“As how, Frank?—I don’t take.”

“Why, in the greater, I will not say beauty—for I don’t think there is greater natural beauty in the general landscape of the States—but novelty and wildness of the scenery! Even the richest and most cultivated tracts of America, that I have seen, except the Western part of New York, which is unquestionably the ugliest, and dullest, and most unpoetical region on earth, have a young untamed freshness about them, which you do not find in England.

“In the middle of the high-tilled and fertile cornfield you come upon some sudden hollow, tangled with brake and bush, which hedge in some small pool where float the brilliant cups and smooth leaves of the water lily, and whence, on your approach, up springs the blue-winged teal or gorgeous wood-duck. Then the long sweeping woodlands, embracing in themselves every variety of ground, deep marshy swamp, and fertile level thick-set with giant timber, and sandy barrens with their scrubby undergrowth, and difficult rocky steeps; and, above all, the seeming and comparative solitude—the dinner carried along with you and eaten under the shady tree, beside the bubbling basin of some spring—all this is vastly more exciting, than walking through trim stubbles and rich turnip fields, and lunching on bread and cheese and home-brewed, in a snug farmhouse. In short, field sports here have a richer range, are much more various, wilder—”

“Hold there, Frank; hold hard there; I cannot concede *the wilder*, not the *really* wilder—seemingly they are wilder; for, as you say, the scenery is wilder—and all the game, with the exception of the English snipe, being wood-haunters, you are led into rougher districts. But oh! no, no!—the field sports are not really wilder—in the Atlantic States at least—nor half so wild as those of England!”

“I should like to hear you prove that, Archer,” answered Frank, “for I am constantly beset with the superiority of American field sports to tame English preserve shooting!”

“Pooh! pooh! that is only by people who know nothing about either; by people who fancy that a preserve means a

park full of tame birds, instead of a range, perhaps, of many thousand acres, of the very wildest, barest moorland, stocked with the wariest and shyest of the feathered race, the red grouse. But what I mean to say, is this, that every English game-bird—to use an American phrase—is warier and wilder than its compeer in the United States. Who, for instance, ever saw in England, Ireland, or Scotland, eighteen or twenty snipe or woodcock, lying within a space of twelve yards square, two or three dogs pointing in the midst of them, and the birds rising one by one, the gunshots rattling over them, till ten or twelve are on the ground before there is time to bag one.

“English partridge will, I grant, do this sometimes, on very warm days in September; but let a man go out with his heavy gun and steady dog late in December, or the month preceding it, let him see thirty or more covies—as on good ground he may—let him see every covey rise at a hundred yards, and fly a mile; let him be proud and glad to bag his three or four brace; and then tell me that there is any sport in these Atlantic States so wild as English winter field-shooting.

“Of grouse shooting on the bare hills, which, by the way, are wilder, more solitary far, and more aloof from the abodes of men, than any thing between Boston and the Green Bay, I do not of course speak; as it confessedly is the most wild and difficult kind of shooting.

“Still less of deer stalking—for Scrope’s book has been read largely even here; and no man, how prejudiced soever, can compare with the standing at a deer-path all day long waiting till a great timid beast is driven up within ten yards of your muzzle, with that extraordinary sport on bald and barren mountains, where nothing but vast and muscular exertion, the eye of the eagle, and the cunning of the serpent, can bring you within range of the wild cattle of the hills.

“Battue shooting, I grant, is tame work; but partridge shooting, after the middle of October, is infinitely wilder, requiring more exertion and more toil than quail shooting. Even the pheasant—the tamest of our English game—is infinitely bolder on the wing than the ruffed grouse, or New York partridge; while about snipe and woodcock there exists no comparison—since by my own observation, confirmed by the opinion of old sportsmen, I am convinced that nine-tenths of the snipe and cock bagged in the States, are killed between fifteen and twenty paces; while I can safely say, I never saw a full snipe

rise in England within that average distance. Quail even, the hardest bird to kill, the swiftest and the boldest on the wing, are very rarely killed further than twenty-five to thirty, whereas you may shoot from daylight to sunset in England, after October, and not pick up a single partridge within the farthest, as a minimum distance."

"Well! that's all true, I grant," said Forester, "yet even you allow that it is harder to kill game here than at home; and if I do not err, I have heard you admit that the best shot in all England could be beat easily by the crack shots on this side; how does all this agree!"

"Why very easily, I think," Harry replied, "though to the last remark, I added *in his first season here!* Now that American field sports are wilder in one sense, I grant readily; with the exception of snipe-shooting here, and grouse-shooting in Scotland, the former being tamer, in all senses, than any English—the latter wilder in all senses than any American—field-sport.

"American sporting, however, is certainly wilder, in so much as it is pursued on much wilder ground; in so much as we have a greater variety of game—and in so much as we have many more snap shots, and fewer fair dead points.

"Harder it is, I grant; for it is all, with scarcely an exception, followed in very thick and heavy covert—covert to which the thickest woods I ever saw in England are but as open ground. Moreover, the woods are so very large that the gun must be close up with the dog; and consequently the shots must, half of them, be fired in attitudes most awkward, and in ground which would, I think, at home, be generally styled impracticable; thirdly, all the summer shooting here is made with the leaf on—with these thick tangled matted swamps clad in the thickest foliage.

"Your dogs must beat within twenty yards at farthest, and when they stand you are aware of the fact rather by ceasing to hear their motion, than by seeing them at point; I am satisfied that of six *pointed* shots in summer shooting, three at the least must be treated as snap shots! Many birds must be shot at—and many *are* killed—which are never seen at all, till they are bagged; and many men here will kill three out of 'our summer woodcock, day in and day out, where an English sportsman, however crack a shot he might be, would give the thing up in despair in half an hour.

"Practice, however, soon brings this all to rights. The first season I shot here—I was a very fair, indeed a good, young shot, when I came out hither—not at all *crack*, but decidedly better than the common run!—the first day I shot was on 4th of July, 1832, the place Seer's swamp, the open end of it; the witness old Tom Draw—and there I missed, in what we *now* call open covert, fourteen birds running; and left the place in despair—I could not, though I missed at home by shooting too quick—I could not, for the life of me, shoot quick enough. Even you, Frank, shoot three times as well as you did, when you began here; yet you began in autumn, which is decidedly a great advantage, and came on by degrees, so that the following summer you were not so much nonplussed, though I remember the first day or two, you *bitched* it badly."

"Well, I believe I must knock under, Harry," Forester answered; "and here comes Timothy with the coffee, and so we will to bed, that taken, though I do want to argufy with you, on some of your other notions about dogs, scent, and so forth. But do you think the Commodore will join us here to-morrow?"

"No! I don't *think* so," Harry said, "I know it! Did not he arrive in New York last first of July, from a yachting tour at four o'clock in the afternoon; receive my note saying that I was off to Tom's that morning; and start by the Highlander at five that evening? Did he not get a team at Whited's and travel all night through, and find me just sitting down to breakfast, and change his toggery, and out, and walk all day—like a trump as he is? And did not we, by the same token, bag—besides twenty-five more killed that we could not find—one hundred and fifteen cock between ten o'clock and sunset; while you, you false deceiver, were kicking up your heels in Buffalo? Is not all this a true bill, and have you now the impudence to ask me whether *I think* the Commodore will come? I only wish I was as sure of a day's sport to-morrow, as I am of his being to the fore at luncheon time!"

"At luncheon time, hey? I did not know that you looked for him so early! Will he be in time, then, for the afternoon's shooting?"

"Why, certainly he will," returned Archer "The wind has been fair up the river all day long, though it has been but light; and the Ianthe will run up before it like a race-horse. I should not be much surprised if he were here to breakfast."

"And that we may be up in time for him, if perchance he should, let us to bed forthwith," said Frank with a heavy yawn.

"I am content," answered Harry, finishing his cup of coffee, and flinging the stump of his cheroot into the fire. "Goodnight! Timothy will call you in the morning."

"Goodnight, old fellow."

And the friends parted merrily, in prospect of a pleasant day's sport on the morrow.

THE MORNING'S SPORT.

It was not yet broad daylight when Harry Archer, who had, as was usual with him on his sporting tour, arisen with the lark, was sitting in the little parlor I have before described, close to the chimney corner, where a bright lively fire was already burning, and spreading a warm cheerful glow through the apartment.

The large round table, drawn up close to the hearth, was covered with a clean though coarse white cloth, and laid for breakfast, with two cups and saucers, flanked by as many plates and egg-cups, although as yet no further preparations for the morning meal, except the presence of a huge home-made loaf and a large roll of rich golden-hued butter, had been made by the neat-handed Phillis of the country inn. Two candles were lighted, for though the day had broken, the sun was not yet high enough to cast his rays into that deep and rock-walled valley, and by their light Archer was busy with the game-bag, the front of which he had finished netting on the previous night.

Frank Forester had not as yet made his appearance; and still, while the gigantic copper kettle bubbled and steamed away upon the hearth, discoursing eloquent music, and servant after servant bustled in, one with a cold quail-pie, another with a quart jug of cream, and fresh eggs ready to be boiled by the fastidious epicures in person, he steadily worked on, housewife and saddler's silk, and wax and scissors ready to his hand; and when at last the door flew open, and the delinquent comrade entered, he flung his finished job upon the chair, and gathered up his implements, with

"Now, Frank, let's lose no time, but get our breakfasts.

Halloa! Tim, bring the rockingham and the tea-chest; do you hear?"

"Well, Harry, so you've done the game-bag," exclaimed the other, as he lifted it up and eyed it somewhat superciliously—"Well, it is a good one certainly; but you are the queerest fellow I ever met, to give yourself unnecessary trouble. Here you have been three days about this bag, hard all; and when it's done, it is not half as good a one as you can buy at Cooper's for a dollar, with all this new-fangled machinery of loops and buttons, and I don't know what."

"And you, Master Frank," retorted Harry, nothing daunted, "to be a good shot and a good sportsman—which, with some few exceptions, I must confess you are—are the most culpably and wilfully careless about your appointments I ever met. I don't call a man half a sportsman, who has not every thing he wants at hand for an emergency, at half a minute's notice. Now it so happens that you cannot get, in New York at all, anything like a decent game-bag—a little fancy-worked French or German jigmaree machine you can get anywhere, I grant, that will do well enough for a fellow to carry on his shoulders, who goes out *robin-gunning*, but nothing for your man to carry, wherein to keep your birds cool, fresh, and unmutilated. Now, these loops and buttons, at which you laugh, will make the difference of a week at least in the bird's keeping, if every hour or so you empty your pockets—wherein I take it for granted you put your birds as fast as you bag them—smooth down their plumage gently, stretch their legs out, and hang them by the heads, running the button down close to the neck of each. In this way this bag, which is, as you see, half a yard long, by a quarter and a half a quarter deep, made double, one bag of fustian, with a net front, which makes two pockets—will carry fifty-one quail or woodcock, no one of them pressing upon, or interfering with, another, and it would carry sixty-eight if I had put another row of loops in the inner bag; which I did not, that I might have the bottom vacant to carry a few spare articles, such as a bag of Westley Richards' caps, and a couple of dozen of Ely's cartridges."

"Oh! that's all very well," said Frank, "but who the deuce can be at the bore of it?"

"Why be at the bore of shooting at all, for that matter?" replied Harry—"I, for one, think that if a thing is worth doing at all, it is worth doing *well*—and I can't bear to kill a hundred

or a hundred and fifty birds, as our party almost always do out here, and then be obliged to throw them away, just for want of a little care. Why, I was shooting summer cock one July day two years ago—there had been heavy rain in the early morning, and the grass and bushes were very wet—Jem Blake was with me, and we had great sport, and he laughed at me like the deuce for taking my birds out of my pocket at the end of every hour's sport, and making Timothy smooth them down carefully, and bag them all after my fashion. Egad I had the laugh though, when we got home at night!"

"How so," asked Frank, "in what way had you the laugh?"

"Simply in this—a good many of the birds were very hard shot, as is always the case in summer shooting, and all of them got more or less wet, as did the pockets of Jem's shooting jacket, wherein he persisted in carrying his birds all day—the end was, that when we got home at night, it having been a close, hot, steamy day, he had not one bird which was not more or less tainted*—and, as you know of course, when taint has once begun, nothing can check it."

"Ay! ay! well that indeed's a reason; if you can't buy such a bag, especially!"

"Well, you cannot then, I can tell you! and I'm glad you're convinced for once; and here comes breakfast—so now let us to work, that we may get on our ground as early as may be. For quail you cannot be too early; for if you don't find them while they are rambling on their feeding ground, it is a great chance if you find them at all."

"But, after all, you can only use up one or two bebies or so; and, that done, you *must* hunt for them in the basking time of day, after all's done and said," replied Frank, who seemed to have got up somewhat paradoxically given that morning.

"Not at all, Frank, not at all," answered Harry—"that is if you know your ground; and know it to be well stocked; and have a good marker with you."

"Oh! this is something new of yours—some strange device fantastical—let's have it, pray."

"Certainly you shall; you shall have it *now* in precept, and in an hour or two in practice. You see those stubbles on the hill—in those seven or eight fields there are, or at least should

* This is a fact—thirty birds were thrown away at night, which had been killed that same day.

be, some five be vies ; there is good covert, good *easy* covert all about, and we can mark our birds down easily ; now, when I find one bevy, I shall get as many barrels into it as I can, mark it down as correctly as possible, and then go and look for another."

"What ! and not follow it up ? Now, Harry, that's mere stuff ; wait till the scent's gone cold, and till the dogs can't find them ? 'Gad, that's clever, any way !"

"Exactly the reverse, friend Frank ; exactly the reverse. If you follow up a bevy, of *quail* mark you, on the instant, it's ten to one almost that you don't spring them. If, on the contrary, you wait for half an hour, you are sure of them. How it is, I cannot precisely tell you. I have sometimes thought that quail have the power of holding in their scent, whether purposely or naturally—from the effect of fear perhaps contracting the pores, and hindering the escape of the effluvia—I know not, but I am far from being convinced even now that it is not so. A very good sportsman, and true friend of mine, insists upon it that birds give out no scent except from the feet, and that, consequently, if they squat without running they cannot be found. I do not, however, believe the theory, and hold it to be disproved by the fact that dead birds do give out scent. I have generally observed that there is no difficulty in retrieving dead quail, but that, wounded, they are constantly lost. But, be that as it may, the birds pitch down, each into the best bit of covert he can find, and squat there like so many stones, leaving no trail or taint upon the grass or bushes, and being of course proportionally hard to find ; in half an hour they will begin, if not disturbed, to call and travel, and you can hunt them up, without the slightest trouble. If you have a very large tract of country to beat, and birds are very scarce, of course it would not answer to pass on ; nor ever, even if they are plentiful, in wild or windy weather, or in large open woods ; but where you have a fair ground, lots of birds, and fine weather, I would always beat on in a circuit, for the reason I have given you. In the first place, every bevy you flush flies from its feeding to its basking ground, so that you get over all the first early, and *know* where to look afterward ; instead of killing off one bevy, and then going blundering on, at blind guess work, and finding nothing. In the second place, you have a chance of driving two or three be vies into one brake, and of getting sport proportionate ; and in the third place, as I have

told you, you are much surer of finding marked birds after an hour's lapse, than on the moment."

"I will do you the justice to say," Forester replied, "that you always make a tolerably good fight in support of your opinions; and so you have done now, but I want to hear something more about this matter of holding scent—facts! facts! and let me judge for myself."

"Well, Frank, give me a bit more of that pie in the mean time, and I will tell you the strongest case in point I ever witnessed. I was shooting near Stamford, in Connecticut, three years ago, with C—— K——, and another friend; we had three as good dogs out, as ever had a trigger drawn over them. My little imported yellow and white setter, Chase, after which this old rascal is called—which Mike Sandford considered the best-nosed dog he had ever broken—a capital young pointer dog of K——'s, which has since turned out, as I hear, superlative, and P——'s old and stanch setter Count. It was the middle of a fine autumn day, and the scenting was very uncommonly good. One of our beaters flushed a bevy of quail very wide of us, and they came over our heads down a steep hillside, and all lighted in a small circular hollow, without a bit of underbrush or even grass, full of tall thrifty oak trees, of perhaps twenty-five years' growth. They were not much out of gun-shot, and we all three distinctly saw them light; and I observed them flap and fold their wings as they settled. We walked straight to the spot, and beat it five or six times over, not one of our dogs ever drawing, and not one bird rising. We could not make it out; my friends thought they had treed, and laughed at me when I expressed my belief that they were still before us, under our very noses. The ground was covered only by a deep bed of sere decaying oak leaves. Well, we went on, and beat all round the neighborhood within a quarter of a mile, and did not find a bird, when lo! at the end of perhaps half an hour, we heard them calling—followed the cry back to that very hollow; the instant we entered it, all the three dogs made game, drawing upon three several birds, roaded them up, and pointed steady, and we had half an hour's good sport, and we were *all* convinced that the birds had been there *all* the time. I have seen many instances of the same kind, and more particularly with wing-tipped birds, but none I think so tangible as this!"

"Well, I am not a convert, Harry ; but, as the Chancellor said, I doubt."

"And that I consider not a little, from such a positive wretch as you are ; but come, we have done breakfast, and it's broad daylight. Come, Timothy, on with the bag and belts ; he breakfasted before we had got up, and gave the dogs a bite."

"Which dogs do you take, Harry ; and do you use cartridge?"

"Oh ! the setters for the morning ; they are the only fellows for the stubble ; we should be all day with the cockers ; even setters, as we *must* break them here for wood shooting, have not enough of speed or dash for the open. Cartridges ? yes ! I shall use a loose charge in my right, and a *blue* cartridge in my left ; later in the season I use a *blue* in my right and a *red* in my left. It just makes the difference between killing with both, or with one barrel. The *blue* kills all of twenty, and the *red* all of thirty-five yards further than loose shot ; and they kill *clean* !"

"Yet many good sportsmen dislike them," Frank replied ; "they say they ball !"

"They do not *now*, if you load with them properly ; formerly they would do so at times, but that defect is now rectified—with the *blue* and *red* cartridges at least—the *green*, which are only fit for wild-fowl, or deer-shooting, will do so sometimes, but very rarely ; and they will execute surprisingly. For a bad or uncertain rifle-shot, the *green* cartridge, with SG shot is the thing—twelve good-sized slugs, propelled with force enough to go through an inch plank, at eighty yards, within a compass of three feet—but no wad must be used, either upon the cartridge or between that and the powder ; the small end must be inserted downward, and the cartridge must be chosen so that the wad at the top shall fit the gun, the case being two sizes less than the calibre. With these directions no man need make a mistake ; and, if he can cover a bird fairly, and is cool enough not to fire within twenty yards, he will never complain of cartridges, after a single trial. Remember, too, that *vice versâ* to the rule of a loose charge, the *heavier* you load with powder, the *closer* will your cartridge carry. The men who do not like cartridges are—you may rely upon it—of the class which prefers scattering guns. I always use them, except in July shooting, and I shall even put a few *red* in my pockets, in case the wind should get up in the afternoon. Besides which, I always

take along two buckshot cartridges, in case of *happening*, as Timothy would say, on some big varmint. I have four pockets in my shooting waistcoat, each stitched off into four compartments—each of which holds, *erect*, one cartridge—you cannot carry them loose in your pocket, as they are very apt to break. Another advantage of this is, that in no way can you carry shot with so little inconvenience, as to weight; besides which, you load one third quicker, and your gun *never* leads!”

“Well! I believe I will take some to-day—but don’t you wait for the Commodore?”

“No! He drives up, as I told you, from Nyack, where he lands from his yacht, and will be here at twelve o’clock to luncheon; if he had been coming for the morning shooting, he would have been here ere this. By that time we shall have bagged twenty-five or thirty quail, and a ruffed grouse or two; besides driving two or three bevs down into the meadows and the alder bushes by the stream, which are quite full of woodcock. After luncheon, with the Commodore’s aid, we will pick up these stragglers, and all the timber-doodles!”

In another moment the setters were unchained, and came careering, at the top of their speed, into the breakfast room, where Harry stood before the fire, loading his double gun, while Timothy was buttoning on his left leggin. Frank, meanwhile, had taken up his gun, and quietly sneaked out of the door, two flat irregular reports explaining, half a moment after, the purport of his absence.

“Well, now, Frank, that *is*”—expostulated Harry—“that *is* just the most snobbish thing I ever saw you do; aint you ashamed of yourself now, you genuine cockney!”

“Not a bit—my gun has not been used these three months, and something *might* have got into the chamber!”

“Something *might not*, if when you cleaned it last you had laid a wad in the centre of a bit of greased rag three inches square and rammed it about an inch down the barrel, leaving the ends of the linen hanging out. And by running your rod down you could have ascertained the fact, without unnecessarily fouling your piece. A gun has no right ever to miss fire *now*; and never *does*, if you use Westley Richards’ caps, and diamond gunpowder—putting the caps on the *last thing*—which has the further advantage of being much the safer plan, and seeing that the powder is up to the cones before you do so. If it is not so, let your hammer down, and give a smart tap to the under side

of the breech, holding it uppermost, and you will never need a picker; or at least almost never. Remember, too, that the best picker in the world is a strong needle headed with sealing wax. And now that you have finished loading, and I lecturing, just jump over the fence to your right; and that footpath will bring us to the stepping-stones across the Ramapo. By Jove, but we shall have a lovely morning."

He did so, and away they went, with the dogs following steadily at the heel, crossed the small river dry-shod, climbed up the wooded bank by dint of hand and foot, and reached the broad brown corn stubble. Harry, however, did not wave his dogs to the right-hand and left, but calling them in, quietly plodded along the headland, and climbed another fence, and crossed a buckwheat stubble, still without beating or disturbing any ground, and then another field full of long bents and ragwort, an old deserted pasture, and Frank began to grumble, but just then a pair of bars gave access to a wide fifty acre lot, which had been wheat, the stubble standing still knee deep, and yielding a rare covert.

"Now we are at the far end of our beat, and we have got the wind too in the dogs' noses, Master Frank—and so hold up, good lads," said Harry. And off the setters shot like lightning, crossing and quartering their ground superbly.

"There! there! well done, old Chase—a dead stiff point already, and Shot backing him as steady as a rail. Step up, Frank, step up quietly, and let us keep the hill of them."

They came up close, quite close to the stanch dog, and then, but not till then, he feathered and drew on, and Shot came crawling up till his nose was but a few inches in the rear of Chase's, whose point he never thought of taking from him. Now they are both upon the game. See how they frown and slaver, the birds are close below their noses.

Whirr—r—r! "There they go—a glorious bevy!" exclaimed Harry, as he cocked his right barrel and cut down the old cock bird, which had risen rather to his right hand, with his loose charge—"blaze away, Frank!" Bang—bang!—and two more birds came fluttering down, and then he pitched his gun up to his eye again, and sent the cartridge after the now distant bevy, and to Frank's admiration a fourth bird was keeled over most beautifully, and clean killed, while crossing to the right, at forty-six yards, as they paced it afterward.

"Now mark! mark, Timothy—mark, Frank!" And shading

their eyes from the level sunbeams, the three stood gazing steadily after the rapid bevy. They cross the pasture, skim very low over the brush fence of the cornfield—they disappear behind it—they are down! no! no! not yet—they are just skirting the summit of the topped maize stalks—now they are down indeed, just by that old ruined hovel, where the cat-briers and sumach have overspread its cellar and foundation with thick underwood. And all the while the sturdy dogs are crouching at their feet unmoving.

“Will you not follow those, Harry?” Forester inquired—“there are at least sixteen of them!”

“Not I,” said Archer, “not I, indeed, till I have beat this field—I expect to put up another bevy among those little crags there in the corner, where the red cedars grow—and if we do, they will strike down the fence of the buckwheat stubble—that stubble we must make good, and the rye beside it, and drive, if possible, all that we find before us to the corn field. Don’t be impatient, and you’ll see in time that I am in the right.”

No more words were now wasted; the four birds were bagged without trouble, and the sportsmen being in the open, were handed over on the spot to Tim; who stroked their freckled breasts, and beautifully mottled wing-coverts and backs, with a caressing touch, as though he loved them; and finally, in true Jack Ketch style, tucked them up severally by the neck. Archer was not mistaken in his prognostics—another bevy had run into the dwarf cedars from the stubble at the sound of the firing, and were roaded up in right good style, first one dog, and then the other, leading; but without any jealousy or haste.

They had, however, run so far, that they had got wild, and, as there was no bottom covert on the crags, had traversed them quite over to the open, on the far side—and, just as Archer was in the act of warning Forester to hurry softly round and head them, they flushed at thirty yards, and had flown some five more before they were in sight, the feathery evergreens for a while cutting off the view—the dogs stood dead at the sound of their wings. Then, as they came in sight, Harry discharged both barrels very quickly—the loose shot first, which evidently took effect, for one bird cowered and seemed about to fall, but gathered wing again, and went on for the present—the cartridge, which went next, although the bevy had flown ten yards further, did its work clean, and stopped its bird. Frank fired but once, and killed, using his cartridge first, and thinking it in vain

to fire the loose shot. The remaining birds skimmed down the hill, and lighted in the thick bushy hedge-row, as Archer had foreseen.

"So much for Ely!" exclaimed Harry—"had we both used two of them, we should have bagged four then. As it is, I have killed one which we shall not get; a thing that I most articularly hate."

"That bird will rise again," said Frank.

"*Never!*" replied the other, "he has one, if not two, shot in him, well forward—if I am not much mistaken, before the wing—he is dead now! but let us on. These we must follow, for they are on our line; you keep this side the fence, and I will cross it with the dogs—come with me, Timothy."

In a few minutes more there was a dead point at the hedge-row.

"Look to, Frank!"

"Ay! ay! Poke them out, Tim;" then followed sundry bumps and threshings of the briers, and out with a noisy flutter burst two birds under Forester's nose. Bang! bang!

"The first shot too quick, altogether," muttered Archer; "Ay, he has missed one; mark it, Tim—there he goes down in the corn, by jingo—you've got that bird, Frank! That's well! Hold up, Shot"—another point within five yards. "Look out again, Frank."

But this time vainly did Tim poke, and thrash, and peer into the bushes—yet still Shot stood, stiff as a marble statue—then Chase drew up and snuffed about, and pushed his head and fore-legs into the matted briers, and thereupon a muzzling noise ensued, and forthwith out he came, mouthing a dead bird, warm still, and bleeding from the neck and breast.

"Frank, he has got my bird—and shot, just as I told you, through the neck and near the great wing joint—good dog! good dog!"

"The devil!"

"Yes, the devil! but look out man, here is yet one more point;" and this time ten or twelve birds flushed upon Archer's side; he slew, as usual, his brace, and as they crossed, at long distance, Frank knocked down one more—the rest flew to the corn-field.

In the middle of the buckwheat they flushed another, and, in the rye, another bevy, both of which crossed the stream, and settled down among the alders. They reached the corn-field,



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and picked up their birds there, quite as fast as Frank himself desired—three ruffed grouse they had bagged, and four rabbits, in a small dingle full of thorns, before they reached the corn; and just as the tin horns were sounding for noon and dinner from many a neighboring farm, they bagged their thirty-fourth quail. At the same moment, the rattle of a distant wagon on the hard road, and a loud cheer replying to the last shot, announced the Commodore: who pulled up at the tavern door just as they crossed the stepping-stones, having made a right good morning's work, with a dead certainty of better sport in the afternoon, since they had marked two untouched bevvies, thirty-five birds at least, beside some ten or twelve more stragglers into the alder brakes, which Harry knew to hold—moreover, thirty woodcock, as he said, at the fewest.

"Well! Harry," exclaimed Frank, as he set down his gun, and sat down to the table, "I must for once knock under—your *practice* has borne out your *precepts*."

THE WOODCOCK.

LUNCHEON was soon discussed, a noble cold quail pie and a spiced round of beef, which formed the most essential parts thereof, displaying in their rapidly diminished bulk ocular evidence of the extent of sportmen's appetites; a single glass of shrub and water followed, cheroots were lighted, and forth the comrades sallied, the Commodore inquiring as they went what were the prospects of success.

"You fellows," he concluded, "have, I suppose, swept the ground completely."

"That you shall see directly," answered Archer; "I shall make you no promises. But see how evidently Grouse recollects those dogs of mine, though it is nearly a year since they have met; don't *you* think so, A——?"

"To be sure I do," replied the Commodore; "I saw it the first moment you came up—had they been strangers he would have tackled them upon the instant; and instead of that he began wagging his tail, and wriggling about, and playing with them. Oh! depend upon it, dogs think, and remember, and reflect far more than we imagine—"

"Oh! run back, Timothy—run back!" here Archer interrupted him—"we don't want you this afternoon. Harness the nags and pack the wagon, and put them to, at five—we shall be at home by then, for we intend to be at Tom's to-night. Now look out, Frank, those three last quail we marked in from the hill dropped in the next field, where the ragwort stands so thick; and five to one, as there is a thin growth of brushwood all down this wall side, they will have run down hither. Why, man alive! you've got no copper caps on!"

"By George! no more I have—I took them off when I laid down my gun in the house, and forgot to replace them."

"And a very dangerous thing you did in taking them off, permit me to assure you. Any one but a fool, or a very young child, knows at once that a gun *with caps on* is loaded. You leave yours on the table without caps, and in comes some meddling chap or other, puts on one *to try the locks*, or to frighten his sweetheart, or for some other no less sapient purpose, and off it goes! and if it kill no one, it's God's mercy! Never do that again, Frank!"

Meanwhile they had arrived within ten yards of the low rickety stone wall, skirted by a thin fringe of saplings, in which Archer expected to find game—Grouse, never in what might be called exact command, had disappeared beyond it.

"Hold up, good dogs!" cried Harry, and as he spoke away went Shot and Chase—the red dog, some three yards ahead, jumped on the wall, and, in the act of bounding over it, saw Grouse at point beyond. Rigid as stone he stood upon that tottering ridge, one *hind* foot drawn up in the act of pointing, for both the fore were occupied in clinging to some trivial inequalities of the rough coping, his feathery flag erect, his black eye fixed, and his lip slavering; for so hot was the scent that it reached his exquisitely fashioned organs, though Grouse was many feet advanced between him and the game. Shot backed at the wall-foot, seeing the red dog only, and utterly unconscious that the pointer had made the game beyond.

"By Jove! but that *is* beautiful!" exclaimed the Commodore. "That is a perfect picture!—the very perfection of steadiness and breaking."

They crossed the wall, and poor Shot, in the rear, saw them no more; his instinct strongly, aye! *naturally*, tempted him to break in, but second nature, in the shape of discipline, prevailed; and, though he trembled with excitement, he moved not an inch.

Grouse was as firm as iron, his nose within six inches of a bunch of wintergreen, pointed directly downward, and his head cocked a little on one side—they stepped up to him, and, still on the wall-top, Chase held to his uneasy attitude.

“Now, then,” said Harry, “look out, till I kick him up.”

No sooner said than done—the toe of his thick shooting-boot crushed the slight evergreen, and out whirred, with his white chaps and speckled breast conspicuous, an old cock quail. He rose to Forester, but ere that worthy had even cocked his gun—for he had now adopted Archer’s plan, and carried his piece always at half cock, till needed—flew to the right across the Commodore; so Frank released his hammer and brought down his Manton, while A—— deliberately covered, and handsomely cut down the bird at five-and-twenty yards.

Grouse made a movement to run in, but came back instantly when called.

“Just look back, if you please, one moment, before loading,” said Harry, “for that down-charge is well worth looking at.”

And so indeed it was—for there, upon the wall-top, where he had been balancing, Chase had contrived to lie down at the gunshot—wagging his stern slightly to and fro, with his white fore-paws hanging down, and his head couched between them, his haunches propped up on the coping stone, and his whole attitude apparently untenable for half a minute.

“Now, load away for pity’s sake, as quickly as you can; that posture must be any thing but pleasant.”

This was soon done; inasmuch as the Commodore is not exactly one to dally in such matters; and when his locks ticked, as he drew the hammers to half-cock, Chase quietly dismounted from his perch, and Shot’s head and fore-paws appeared above the barrier; but not till Archer’s hand gave the expected signal did the stanch brutes move on.

“Come, Shot, good dog—it is but fair you should have some part of the fun! Seek dead! seek dead! that’s it, sir! Toho! steady! Fetch him, good lad! Well done!”

In a few minutes’ space, four or five more birds came to bag—they had run, at the near report, up the wall side among the bushes, and the dogs footed them along it, now one and now another taking the lead successively, but without any eagerness or raking—looking round constantly, each to observe his comrades’ or his master’s movements, and pointing slightly, but

not steadily, at every foot, till at the last all three, in different places, stood almost simultaneously—all three dead points.

One bird jumped up to Frank, which he knocked over. A double shot fell to the Commodore, who held the centre of the line, and dropped both cleverly—the second, a long shot, wing-tipped only. Harry flushed three and killed two clean, both within thirty paces, and then covered the third bird with his empty barrels—but, though no shot could follow from that quarter, he was not to escape scot free, for wheeling short to the left hand, and flying high, he crossed the Commodore in easy distance, and afterward gave Forester a chance.

“Try him, Frank,” halloed Archer—and “It’s no use !” cried A——, almost together, just as he raised his gun, and levelled it a good two feet before the quail.

But it *was* use, and Harry’s practised eye had judged the distance more correctly than the short sight of the Commodore permitted—the bird quailed instantly as the shot struck, but flew on notwithstanding, slanting down wind, however, towards the ground, and falling on the hill-side at a full hundred yards.

“We shall not get him,” Forester exclaimed ; “and I am sorry for it, since it was a good shot.”

“A right good shot,” responded Harry, “and we *shall* get him. He fell quite dead ; I saw him bounce up, like a ball, when he struck the hard ground. But A——’s second bird is only wing-tipped, and I don’t think we shall get him ; for the ground where he fell is very tussocky and full of grass, and if he creeps in, as they mostly will do, into some hole in the bog-ground, it is ten to one against the best dog in America !”

And so it came to pass, for they *did* bag Forester’s, and all the other quail except the Commodore’s, which, though the dogs trailed him well, and worked like Trojans, they could not for their lives make out.

After this little rally they went down to the alders by the stream-side, and had enough to do, till it was growing rapidly too dark to shoot—for the woodcock were very plentiful—it was sweet ground, too, not for feeding only, but for lying, and that, as Harry pointed out, is a great thing in the autumn.

The grass was short and still rich under foot, although it froze hard every night ; but all along the brook’s marge there were many small oozy bubbling springlets, which it required a stinging night to congeal ; and round these the ground was poached up by the cattle, and laid bare in spots of deep, soft,

black loam ; and the innumerable chalkings told the experienced eye at half a glance, that, where they laid up for the night so-ever, here was their feeding ground, and here it had been through the autumn.

But this was not all, for at every ten or twenty paces was a dense tuft of willow bushes, growing for the most part upon the higher knolls where it was dry and sunny, their roots heaped round with drift wood, from the decay of which had shot up a dense tangled growth of cat-briers. In these the birds were lying, all but some five or six which had run out to feed, and were flushed, fat, and large, and lazy, quite in the open meadow.

"They stay here later," Harry said, as they bagged the last bird, which, be it observed, was the twenty-seventh, "than any where I know. Here I have killed them when there was ice thicker than a dollar on all the waters round about, and when you might see a thin and smoke-like mist boiling up from each springle. Kill them all off to-day, and you will find a dozen fresh birds here to-morrow, and so on for a fortnight—they come down from the high ground as it gets too cold for them to endure their high and rarified atmosphere, and congregate hither!"

"And why not more in number at a time?" asked A——.

"Ay! there we are in the dark—we do not know sufficiently the habits of the bird to speak with certainty. I do not think they are pugnacious, and yet you never find more on a feeding ground than it will well accommodate for many days, nay weeks, together. One might imagine that their migrations would be made *en masse*, that all the birds upon these neighboring hills would crowd down to this spot together, and feed here till it was exhausted, and then on—but this is not so! I know fifty small spots like this, each a sure find in the summer for three or four broods, say from eight to twelve birds. During the summer, when you have killed the first lot, no more return—but the moment the frost begins, there you will find them—never exceeding the original eight or ten in number, but keeping up continually to that mark—and whether you kill none at all, or thirty birds a week, there you will always find about that number, and in no case any more. Those that are killed off are supplied, within two days at farthest, by new comers; yet, so far as I can judge, the original birds, if not killed, hold their own, unmolested by intruders. Whence the supplies come in—for they must be near neighbors by the rapidity of their succes-

sion—and why they abstain from their favorite grounds in worse *locations*, remains, and I fear we must remain, in the dark. All the habits of the woodcock are, indeed, very partially and slightly understood. They arrive here, and breed early in the spring—sometimes, indeed, before the snow is off the hills—get their young off in June, and with their young are most unmercifully, most unsportsmanly, thinned off, when they can hardly fly—such is the error, as I think it, of the law—but I could not convince my stanch friends, Philo, and J. Cypress, Jr., of the fact, when they bestirred themselves in favor of the progeny of their especial favorites, *perdix virginiana* and *tetrao umbellus*, and did defer the times for slaying them legitimately to such a period, that it is in fact next to impossible to kill the latter bird at all. But vainly did I plead, and a false advocate was Cypress after all, despite his nominal friendship, for that unhappy *Scolopax*, who in July at least deserves his nickname *minor*, or the infant. For, setting joke apart, what a burning shame it is to murder the poor little half-fledged younglings in July, when they will scarcely weigh six ounces; when they will drop again within ten paces of the dog that flushes, or the gun that misses them; and when the heat will not allow you even to enjoy the consummation of their slaughter. Look at these fellows now, with their gray foreheads, their plump ruddy breasts, their strong, well-feathered pinions, each one ten ounces at the least. Think how these jolly old cocks tower away, with their shrill whistle, through the tree-tops, and twist and dodge with an agility of wing and thought-like speed, scarcely inferior to the snipe's or swallow's, and fly a half mile if you miss them; and laugh to scorn the efforts of any one to bag them, who is not an out-and-outer! No chance shot, no stray pellet speaks for these—it must be the charge, the whole charge, and nothing but the charge, which will cut down the grown bird of October! The law should have said woodcock thou shalt *not* kill until September; quail thou shalt *not* kill till October, the twenty-fifth if you please; partridge thou shalt kill in all places, and at all times, when thou canst! and that, as we know, Frank, and A——, that is not everywhere or often.”

“But, seriously,” said the Commodore, “seriously, would you indeed abolish summer shooting?”

“Most seriously! most solemnly I would!” Archer responded. “In the first place because, as I have said, it is a perfect sin to shoot cock in July; and secondly, because no one would. I am

convinced, shoot for his own pleasure at that season, if it were not a question of now or never. Between the intense heat, and the swarms of musquitoes, and the unfitness of that season for the dogs, which can rarely scent their game half the proper distance, and the density of the leafy coverts; and lastly, the difficulty of keeping the game fresh till you can use it, render July shooting a toil, in my opinion, rather than a real pleasure; although we are such hunting creatures, that rather than not have our prey at all, we will pursue it in all times, and through all inconveniences. Fancy, my dear fellows, only fancy what superb shooting we should have if not a bird were killed till they were all full grown, and fit to kill; fancy bagging a hundred and twenty-five *fall* woodcock in a single autumn day, as we did this very year on a summer's day!"

"Oh! I agree with you completely," said Frank Forester, "but I am afraid such a law will never be brought to bear in this country—the very day on which cock shooting does not really begin, but is supposed by nine tenths of the people to begin—the fourth of July is against it.* Moreover, the amateur *killers* of game are so very few, in comparison with the amateur *eaters* thereof, that it is all but impossible to enforce the laws at all upon this subject. Woodcock even now are eaten in June—nay, I have heard, and believe it to be true, that many hotels in New York serve them up even in March and April; quail, this autumn, have been sold openly in the markets, many days previous to the expiration of close time. And, in fact, sorry I am to say it, as far as eating-houses are in question, the game laws are nearly a dead letter.

"In the country, also, I have universally found it to be the case, that although the penalty of a breach may be exacted from strangers, no farmer will differ with a neighbor, as they call it, for the sake of a bird. Whether time, and a greater diffusion of sporting propensities, and sporting feelings, may alter this for the better or no, I leave to sager and more politic pates than mine. And now I say, Harry, you surely do not intend to trundle us off to Tom Draw's to-night without a drink at starting? I see Timothy has got the drag up to the door, and the horses harnessed, and all ready for a start."

* In the State of New York close time for woodcock expires on the last day of June—in New Jersey on the fourth of July—leaving the bird lawful prey on the 1st and the 5th, respectively.

"Yes! yes! all that's true," answered Harry, "but take my word for it, the liquor case is not put in yet. Well, Timothy," he went on, as they reached the door, "that is right. Have you got everything put up?"

"All but t' gam' bag and t' liquor ca-ase, sur," Tim replied, touching his hat gnostically as he spoke; "Ay reckoned please sur, 'at you'd maybe want to fill t' yan oop, and empty t' oother!"

"Very well thought, indeed!" said Archer, winking to Forester the while. "Let that boy stand a few minutes to the horses' heads, and come into the house yourself and pack the birds up, and fetch us some water."

"T' watter is upon t' table, sur, and t' cigars, and a loight; but Ay'se be in wi' you directly. Coom hither, lad, till Ay shew thee hoo to guide 'em; thou munna tooch t' bits for the loife o' thee, but joost stan' there anent them—if they stir loike, joost speak to 'em—Ayse hear thee!" and he left his charge and entered the small parlor, where the three friends were now assembled, with a cheroot apiece already lighted, and three tall brimming rummers on the table.

"Look sharp and put the birds up," said Harry, pitching, as he spoke, the fine fat fellows right and left out of his wide game pockets, "and when that's done fill yourself out a drink, and help us on with our great coats."

"What are you going to do with the guns?" inquired the Commodore.

"To carry them uncased and loaded; substituting in my own two buckshot cartridges for loose shot," replied Archer. "The Irish are playing the very devil through this part of the country—we are close to the line of the great Erie railroad—and they are murdering, and robbing, and I know not what, for miles around. The last time I was at old Tom's he told me that but ten days or a fortnight previously a poor Irish woman, who lived in his village, started to pay a visit to her mother by the self same road we shall pass to-night; and was found the next morning with her person brutally abused, kneeling against a fence stone dead, strangled with her own cambric handkerchief. He says, too, that not a week passes but some of them are found dead in the meadows, or in the ditches, killed in some lawless fray; and no one ever dreams of taking any notice, or making any inquiry about the matter!"

"Is it possible? then keep the guns at hand by all means!"

"Yes! but this time we will violate my rule about the copper caps—there is no rule, you are aware, but what has some exception—and the exception to this of mine is, always take off your copper caps before getting into a wagon; the jar will occasionally explode them, an upset will undoubtedly. So uncap, Messrs. Forester and A——, and put the bright little exploders into your pockets, where they will be both safe and handy! And now, birds are in, drinks are in, dogs and guns are in, and now let us be off!"

No more words were wasted; the landlord's bill was paid, Frank Forester and Timothy got up behind, the Commodore took the front seat, Harry sprang, reins in hand, to the box, and off they bowled, with lamps and cigars burning merrily, for it was now quite dark, along the well-known mountain road, which Archer boasted he could drive as safely in the most gloomy night of winter as in a summer noon. And so it proved this time, for though he piloted his horses with a cool head and delicate finger through every sort of difficulty that a road can offer, up long and toilsome hills without a rail between the narrow track and the deep precipice, down sharp and stony pitches, over loose clattering bridges, along wet marshy levels, he never seemed in doubt or trouble for a moment, but talked and laughed away, as if he were a mere spectator.

After they had gone a few miles on their way—"you broke off short, Archer," said the Commodore, "in the middle of your dissertation on the natural history and habits of the woodcock, turning *a propos des bottes* to the cruelty of killing them in midsummer. In all which, by the way, I quite agree with you. But I don't want to lose the rest of your lucubrations on this most interesting topic. What do you think becomes of the birds in August, after the moult begins?"

"Verily, Commodore, that is a positive poser. Many good sportsmen believe that they remain where they were before; getting into the thickest and wettest brakes, refusing to rise before the dog, and giving out little or no scent!"

"Do you believe this?"

"No; I believe there is a brief migration, but whither I cannot tell you with any certainty. Some birds do stay, as they assert; and that a few *do* stay, and *do* give out enough scent to enable dogs to find them, is a proof to me that *all* do not. A good sportsman can always find a few birds even during the moult, and I do not think that birds killed at that time are at

all worse eating than others. But I am satisfied that the great bulk shift their quarters, whither I have not yet fully ascertained; but I believe to the small runnels and deep swales which are found throughout all the mountain tracts of the middle States; and in these, as I believe, they remain dispersed and scattered in such small parties that they are not worth looking after, till the frost drives them down to their old haunts. A gentleman, whom I can depend on, told me once that he climbed Bull Hill one year late in September—Bull Hill is one of the loftiest peaks in the Highlands of the Hudson—merely to show the prospect to a friend, and he found all the brushwood on the summit full of fine autumn cock, not a bird having been seen for weeks in the low woodlands at the base. They had no guns with them at the time, and some days elapsed before he could again spare a few hours to hunt them up; in the meantime frost came, the birds returned to their accustomed swamps and levels, and, when he did again scale the rough mountain, not a bird rewarded his trouble. This, if true, which I do not doubt, would go far to prove my theory correct; but it is not easy to arrive at absolute certainty, for if I am right, during that period birds are to be found no where in abundance, and a man must be a downright Audubon to be willing to go mountain-stalking—the hardest walking in the world, by the way—purely for the sake of learning the habits of friend *Scolopax*, with no hope of getting a good bag after all.”

“How late have you ever killed a cock previous to their great southern flight?”

“Never myself beyond the fifteenth of November; but Tom Draw assures me, and his asseveration was accidentally corroborated by a man who walked along with him, that he killed thirty birds last year in Hell-hole, which both of you fellows know, on the thirteenth of December. There had been a very severe frost indeed, and the ice on that very morning was quite thick, and the mud frozen hard enough to bear in places. But the day was warm, bright, and genial, and, as he says, it came into his head to see ‘if cock was all gone,’ and he went to what he knew to be the latest ground, and found the very heaviest and finest birds he ever saw!”

“Oh! that of course,” said A——, “if he found any! Did you ever hear of any other bird so late?”

“Yes! later—Mike Sandford, I think, but some Jerseyman or other—killed a couple the day after Christmas day, on a

long southern slope covered with close dwarf cedars, and watered by some tepid springs, not far from Pine Brook; and I have been told that the rabbit shooters, who always go out in a party between Christmas and New Year's day, almost invariably flush a bird or two there in mid-winter. The same thing is told of a similar situation on the south-western slope of Staten Island; and I believe truly in both instances. These, however must, I think, be looked upon not as cases of late emigration, but as rare instances of the bird wintering here to the northward; which I doubt not a few do annually. I should like much to know if there is any State of the Union where the cock is perennial. I do not see why he should not be so in Maryland or Delaware, though I have never heard it stated so to be. The great heat of the extreme southern summer drives them north, as surely as our northern winter sends them south; and the great emigrations of the main flight are northward in February and March, and southward in November, varying by a few days only according to the variations of the seasons!"

"Well, I trust they have not emigrated hence yet—ha! ha! ha!" laughed the Commodore, with his peculiar hearty, deep-toned merriment.

"Not they! not they! I warrant them," said Archer; "but that to-morrow must bring forth."

"Come, Harry," exclaimed Forester, after a little pause, "spin us a shooting yarn, to kill the time, till we get to fat Tom's."

"A yarn! well, what shall it be?"

"I don't know; oh! yes! yes! I do. You once told me something about a wolf-hunt, and then shut up your mouth all at once, and would give me no satisfaction."

"A wolf-hunt?" cried the Commodore, "were you ever at a wolf-hunt; and here in this country, Harry?"

"Indeed was I, and—"

"The story, then, the story; we must have it."

"Oh! as for story, there is not much—"

"The story! the story!" shouted Frank. "You may as well begin at once, for we will have it."

"Oh! very well. All is one to me, but you will be tired enough of it before I have got through, so here goes for

A WOLF HUNT ON THE WARWICK HILLS,"

said Archer, and without more ado, spun his yarn as follows:

"There are few wilder regions within the compass of the

United States, much less in the vicinity of its most populous and cultivated districts, than that long line of rocky wood-crowned heights which—at times rising to an elevation and exhibiting a boldness of outline that justifies the application to them of the term ‘mountains,’ while at others they would be more appropriately designated as hills or knolls—run all across the Eastern and the Midland States, from the White Mountains westward to the Alleghanies, between which mighty chains they form an intermediate and continuous link.

“Through this stern barrier, all the great rivers of the States, through which they run, have rent themselves a passage, exhibiting in every instance the most sublime and boldest scenery, while many of the minor, though still noble streams, come forth sparkling and bright and cold from the clear lakes and lonely springs embosomed in its dark recesses.

“Possessing, for the most part, a width of eight or ten miles, this chain of hills consists, at some points, of a single ridge, rude, forest-clad and lonely—at others, of two, three, or even four distinct and separate lines of heights, with valleys more or less highly cultured, long sheets of most translucent water, and wild mountain streams dividing them.

“With these hills—known as the Highlands—where the gigantic Hudson has cloven, at some distant day, a devious path for his eternal and resistless waters, and by a hundred other names, the Warwick Hills, the Greenwoods, and yet farther west, the Blue Ridge and the Kittatinny Mountains, as they trend southerly and west across New York and New Jersey—with these hills I have now to do.

“Not as the temples meet for the lonely muse, fit habitations for the poet’s rich imaginings! not as they are most glorious in their natural scenery—whether the youthful May is covering their rugged brows with the bright tender verdure of the tasselled larch, and the yet brighter green of maple, mountain ash and willow—or the full flush of summer has clothed their forests with impervious and shadowy foliage, while carpeting their sides with the unnumbered blossoms of calmia, rhododendron and azalia!—whether the gorgeous hues of autumn gleam like the banners of ten thousand victor armies along their rugged slopes, or the frozen winds of winter have roofed their headlands with inviolate white snow! Not as their bowels teem with the wealth of mines which ages of man’s avarice may vainly labor to exhaust! but as they are the loved abode of many a woodland

denizen that has retreated, even from more remote and seemingly far wilder fastnesses, to these sequestered haunts. I love them, in that the graceful hind conceals her timid fawn among the ferns that wave on the lone banks of many a nameless rill, threading their hills, untrodden save by the miner, or the unfrequent huntsman's foot—in that the noble stag frays oftentimes his antlers against their giant trees—in that the mighty bear lies hushed in grim repose amid their tangled swamps—in that their bushy dingles resound nightly to the long-drawn howl of the gaunt famished wolf—in that the lynx and wild-cat yet mark their prey from the pine branches—in that the ruffed grouse drums, the woodcock bleats, and the quail chirrups from every height or hollow—in that, more strange to tell, the noblest game of trans-atlantic fowl, the glorious turkey—although, like angels' visits, they be indeed but few and far between—yet spread their bronzed tails to the sun, and swell and gobble in their most secret wilds.

“I love those hills of Warwick—many a glorious day have I passed in their green recesses ; many a wild tale have I heard of sylvan sport and forest warfare, and many, too, of patriot partisanship in the old revolutionary days—the days that tried men's souls—while sitting at my noontide meal by the secluded well-head, under the canopy of some primeval oak, with implements of woodland sport, rifle or shot-gun by my side, and well-broke setter or stanch hound recumbent at my feet. And one of these tales will I now venture to record, though it will sound but weak and feeble from my lips, if compared to the rich, racy, quaint and humorous thing it was, when flowing from the nature-gifted tongue of our old friend Tom Draw.”

“Hear ! hear !” cried Frank, “the chap is eloquent !”

“It was the middle of the winter 1832—which was, as you will recollect, of most unusual severity—that I had gone up to Tom Draw's, with a view merely to quail shooting, though I had taken up, as usual, my rifle, hoping perhaps to get a chance shot at a deer. The very first night I arrived, the old bar-room was full of farmers, talking all very eagerly about the ravages which had been wrought among their flocks by a small pack of wolves, five or six, as they said, in number, headed by an old gaunt famished brute, which had for many years been known through the whole region, by the loss of one hind foot, which had been cut off in a steel trap.

“More than a hundred sheep had been destroyed during the

winter, and several calves beside ; and what had stirred especially the bile of the good yeomen, was that, with more than customary boldness, they had the previous night made a descent into the precincts of the village, and carried off a fat wether of Tom Draw's.

“ A slight fall of snow had taken place the morning I arrived, and, this suggesting to Tom's mind a possibility of hunting up the felons, a party had gone out and tracked them to a small swamp on the Bellevalle Mountain, wherein they had undoubtedly made their head-quarters. Arrangements had been made on all sides—forty or fifty stout and active men were mustered, well armed, though variously, with muskets, ducking-guns and rifles—some fifteen couple of strong hounds, of every height and color, were collected—some twenty horses saddled and bridled, and twice as many sleighs were ready ; with provisions, ammunition, liquor and blankets, all prepared for a week's bivouac. The plan prescribed was in the first place to surround the swamp, as silently as possible, with all our forces, and then to force the pack out so as to face our volley. This, should the method be successful, would finish the whole hunt at once ; but should the three-legged savage succeed in making his escape, we were to hunt him by relays, bivouacking upon the ground wherever night should find us, and taking up the chase again upon the following morning, until continual fatigue should wear out the fierce brute. I had two horses with me, and Tim Matlock ; so I made up my mind at once, got a light one-horse sleigh up in the village, rigged it with all my bear-skins, good store of whiskey, eatables, and so forth, saddled the gray with my best Somerset, holsters and surcingle attached, and made one of the party on the instant.

“ Before daylight we started, a dozen mounted men leading the way, with the intent to get quite round the ridge, and cut off the retreat of these most wily beasts of prey, before the coming of the rear-guard should alarm them—and the remainder of the party, sleighing it merrily along, with all the hounds attached to them. The dawn was yet in its first gray dimness when we got into line along the little ridge which bounds that small dense brake on the northeastern side—upon the southern side the hill rose almost inaccessibly in a succession of short limestone ledges—westward the open woods, through which the hounds and footmen were approaching, sloped down in a long easy fall, into the deep secluded basin, filled with the densest and

most thorny coverts, and in the summer time waist deep in water, and almost inaccessible, though now floored with a sheet of solid ice, firm as the rocks around it—due northward was an open field, dividing the wolf-dingle from the mountain road by which we always travel.

“ Our plot had been well laid, and thus far had succeeded. I, with eleven horsemen, drawn up in easy pistol shot one of the other, had taken our ground in perfect silence; and, as we readily discovered, by the untrodden surface of the snow, our enemies were as yet undisturbed. My station was the extreme left of our line, as we faced westward, close to the first ridge of the southern hill; and there I sat in mute expectancy, my holsters thrown wide open, my *Kuchenreüters* loaded and cocked, and my good ounce-ball rifle lying prepared within the hollow of my arm.

“ Within a short half hour I saw the second party, captained by our friend Garry, coming up one by one, and forming silently and promptly upon the hill side—and directly after I heard the crash and shout of our beaters, as they plunged into the thicket at its westward end. So far as I could perceive, all had gone well. Two sides, my own eyes told me, were surrounded, and the continuous line in which the shouts ran all along the farther end, would have assured me, if assurance had been needful, for Tom himself commanded in that quarter, that all was perfectly secure on that side. A Jerseyman, a hunter of no small repute, had been detached with a fourth band to guard the open fields upon the north; due time had been allotted to him, and, as we judged, he was upon his ground. Scarce had the first yell echoed through the forest before the pattering of many feet might be heard, mingled with the rustling of the matted boughs throughout the covert—and as the beaters came on, a whole host of rabbits, with no less than seven foxes, two of them gray, came scampering through our line in mortal terror; but on they went unharmed, for strict had been the orders that no shot should be fired, save at the lawful objects of the chase. Just at this moment I saw Garry, who stood a hundred feet above me on the hill, commanding the whole basin of the swamp, bring up his rifle. This was enough for me—my thumb was on the cock, the nail of my forefinger pressed closely on the trigger-guard. He lowered it again, as though he had lost sight of his object—raised it again with great rapidity, and fired. My eye was on the muzzle of his piece, and just as the bright stream of

flame glanced from it, distinctly visible in the dim of morning twilight, before my ear had caught the sound of the report, a sharp long snarl rose from the thicket, announcing that a wolf was wounded. Eagerly, keenly did I listen; but there came no further sound to tell me of his whereabouts.

“‘I hit him,’ shouted Garry, ‘I hit him then, I swon; but I guess not so badly, but he can travel still. Look out you, Archer, he’s squatted in the thick there, and won’t stir ’till they get close a top on him.’

“While he was speaking yet, a loud and startling shout arose from the open field, announcing to my ear upon the instant that one or more had broken covert at some unguarded spot, as it was evident from the absence of any firing. The leader of our squad was clearly of the same opinion; for, motioning to us to spread our line a little wider, he galloped off at a tremendous rate, spurning the snowballs high into the air, accompanied by three of his best men, to stop the gap which had been left through the misapprehension of the Jerseyman.

“This he accomplished; but not until the great wolf, wilier than his comrades, had got off unharmed. He had not moved five minutes before a small dark bitch-wolf broke away through our line, at the angle furthest from my station, and drew a scattering volley from more than half our men—too rapid and too random to be deadly—though several of the balls struck close about her, I thought she had got off scot free; but Jem McDaniel—whom you know—a cool, old steady hand, had held his fire, and taking a long quiet aim, lodged his ball fairly in the centre of her shoulders—over she went, and over, tearing the snow with tooth and claw in her death agony; while fancying, I suppose, that all our guns were emptied—for, by my life, I think the crafty brutes can almost reason—out popped two more! one between me and my right hand man—the other, a large dog, dragging a wounded leg behind him, under my horse’s very feet. Bob made a curious demi-volte, I do assure you, as the dark brindled villain darted between his fore legs with an angry snarl; but at a single word and slight admonition of the curb, stood motionless as though he had been carved in marble. Quickly I brought my rifle up, though steadily enough, and—more, I fancy, by good luck than management—planted my bullet in the neck, just where the skull and spine unite, so that he bounced three feet at least above the frozen snow, and fell quite dead, within twelve paces of the covert. The other wolf,

which had crept out to my right hand, was welcomed by the almost simultaneous fire of three pieces, one of which only lodged its bullet, a small one by the way—eighty or ninety only to the pound—too light entirely to tell a story, in the brute's loins.

“He gave a savage yell enough as the shot told; and, for the first twenty or thirty yards, dragged his hind quarters heavily; but, as he went on, he recovered, gathering headway very rapidly over the little ridge, and through the open woodland, toward a clear field on the mountain's brow. Just as this passed, a dozen shots were fired, in a quick running volley, from the thicket, just where an old cart-way divides it; followed, after a moment's pause, by one full, round report, which I knew instantly to be the voice of old Tom's musket; nor did I err, for, while its echoes were yet vocal in the leafless forest, the owner's jovial shout was heard—

“‘Wiped all your eyes, boys! all of them, by the Eternal!—Who-whoop for our side!—and I'll bet horns for all on us, old leather-breeches has killed his'n.’

“This passed so rapidly—in fact it was all nearly simultaneous—that the fourth wolf was yet in sight, when the last shot was fired. We all knew well enough that the main object of our chase had for the time escaped us!—the game was all afoot!—three of them slain already; nor was there any longer aught to be gained by sticking to our stations. So, more for deviltry than from entertaining any real hope of overtaking him, I chucked my rifle to the nearest of the farmers, touched old Bob with the spur, and went away on a hard gallop after the wounded fugitive, who was now plodding onward at the usual long loping canter of his tribe. For about half a mile the wood was open, and sloped gently upward, until it joined the open country, where it was bounded by a high rugged fence, made in the usual snake fashion, with a huge heavy top-rail. This we soon reached; the wolf, which was more hurt than I had fancied, beginning to lag grievously, crept through it scarcely a hundred yards ahead of me, and, by good luck, at a spot where the top rail had been partially dislodged, so that Bob swept over it, almost without an effort, in his gallop; though it presented an impenetrable rampart to some half dozen of the horsemen who had followed. I was now in a cleared lot of some ten acres, forming the summit of the hill, which, farther on, sunk steeply into a dark ravine full of thick brushwood, with a small verge

of thinly growing coppice not more than twenty yards in width, on tolerably level ground, within the low stone-wall which parted it from the cultivated land. I felt that I was now upon my vantage ground; and you may be sure, Frank, that I spared not the spurs; but the wolf, conscious probably of the vicinity of some place of safety, strained every nerve and ran, in fact, as if he had been almost unwounded; so that he was still twelve or fourteen paces from me when he jumped on the wall.

“Once over this, I well knew he was safe; for I was thoroughly acquainted with the ground, and was of course aware that no horse could descend the banks of the precipitous ravine. In this predicament, I thought I might as well take a chance at him with one of my good pistols, though of course with faint hopes of touching him. However, I pulled out the right hand nine-inch barrel, took a quick sight, and let drive at him; and, much to my delight, the sound was answered by the long snarling howl, which I had that day heard too often to doubt any more its meaning. Over he jumped, however, and the wall covering him from my sight, I had no means of judging how badly he was hurt; so on I went, and charged the wall with a tight rein, and a steady pull; and lucky for me was it, that I had a steady pull; for under the lee of the wall there was a heap of rugged logs into which Bob plunged gallantly, and, in spite of my hard hold on him, floundered a moment, and went over. Had I been going at top speed, a very nasty fall must have been the immediate consequence—as it was, both of us rolled over; but with small violence, and on soft snow, so that no harm was done.

“As I came off, however, I found myself in a most unpleasant neighborhood; for my good friend the wolf, hurt pretty badly by the last shot, had, as it seemed, ensconced himself among the logs, whence Bob’s assault and subsequent discomfiture had somewhat suddenly dislodged him; so that, as I rolled over on the snow, I found myself within six feet of my friend, seemingly very doubtful whether to fight or fly! But, by good luck, my bullet had struck him on the hip-bone, and being of a rather large calibre, had let his claret pretty freely loose, besides shattering the bone, so that he was but in poor fighting trim; and I had time to get back to the gray—who stood snorting and panting, up to his knees in snow and rubbish, but without offering to stir—to draw my second pistol, and to give Isegrin—as the Germans call him—the *coup de grace*, before he could

attain the friendly shelter of the dingle, to which with all due speed he was retreating. By this time all our comrades had assembled. Loud was the glee—boisterous the applause, which fell especially to me, who had performed with my own hand the glorious feat of slaying two wolves in one morning; and deep the cups of applejack, Scotch whiskey, and Jamaica spirits, which flowed in rich libations, according to the tastes of the ompotators, over the slaughtered quarry.

“Breakfast was produced on the spot; cold salt pork, onions, and hard biscuit forming the principal dishes, washed down by nothing weaker than the pure ardent! Not long, however, did fat Tom permit us to enjoy our ease.

“‘Come, boys,’ he shouted, ‘no lazin’ here; no gormandizin’—the worst part of our work’s afore us; the old lame devil is afoot, and five miles off by now. We must get back, and lay the hounds on, right stret off—and well if the scent an’t cold now! He’s tuk right off toward Duckcedars’—for so Tom ever calls Truxedo Pond—a lovely crescent-shaped lakelet deep in the bosom of the Greenwoods—‘so off with you, Jem, down by the road, as hard as you can strick with ten of your boys in sleighs, and half the hounds; and if you find his tracks acrost the road, don’t wait for us, but strick right arter him. You, Garry, keep stret down the old road with ten dogs and all the plunder—we’ll meet at night, I reckon.’

“No sooner said than done! the parties were sent off with the relays. This was on Monday morning—Tom and I, and some thirteen others, with eight couple of the best dogs, stuck to his slot on foot. It was two hours at least, so long had he been gone, before a single hound spoke to it, and I had begun well nigh to despair; but Tom’s immense sagacity, which seemed almost to know instinctively the course of the wily savage, enabling us to cut off the angles of his course, at last brought us up somewhat nearer to him. At about noon, two or three of the hounds opened, but doubtfully and faintly. His slot, however, showed that they were right, and lustily we cheered them on! Tom, marvelling the while that we heard not the cry of Jem’s relay.

“‘For I’ll be darned,’ he said, ‘if he hasn’t crossed the road long enough since; and that dumb nigger, Jem’s not had the sense to stick to him!’

“For once, however, the fat man was wrong; for, as it appeared when we neared the road, the wolf had headed back,

scared doubtless by some injudicious noise of our companions, and making a wide ring, had crossed three miles below the spot where Jem was posted. This circuit we were forced to make, as at first sight we fancied he had headed altogether back, and it was four o'clock before we got upon his scent, hot, fresh, and breast-high; running toward the road, that is, due eastward from the covert whence he had bolted in the morning. Nor were our friends inactive; for, guided by the clamors of our pack, making the forest musical, they now held down the road; and, as the felon crossed, caught a long view of him as he limped over it, and laid the fresh hounds on.

“A brilliant rally followed—we calling off our wearied dogs, and hasting to the lower road, where we found Garry with the sleighs, and dashing off in our turn through all sorts of by-paths and wood-roads to head them once again! This, with much labor, we effected; but the full winter-moon had risen, and the innumerable stars were sparkling in the frosty skies, when we flogged off the hounds—kindled our night fires—prepared our evening meal, feasted, and spread our blankets, and slept soundly under no warmer canopy than the blue firmament—secure that our lame friend would lie up for the night at no great distance. With the first peep of dawn we were again afoot, and, the snow still befriending us, we roused him from a cedar-brake at about nine o'clock, cut him off three times with fresh dogs and men, the second day, and passed the night, some sixteen miles from home, in the rude hovel of a charcoal burner.

“Greater excitement I cannot imagine, than that wild, independent chace!—sometimes on foot, cheering the hounds through swamp and dingle, over rough cliffs and ledges where foot of horse could avail nothing. Sometimes on horseback, galloping merrily through the more open woodlands. Sometimes careering in the flying sleigh, to the gay music of its bells, along the wild wood-paths! Well did we fare, too—ay, sumptuously!—for our outskirters, though they reserved their rifles for the appropriate game, were not so sparing with the shot-gun; so that, night after night, our chaldron reeked with the mingled steam of rabbit, quail, and partridge, seethed up *à la Meg Merrilies*, with fat pork, onions, and potatoes—by the Lord Harry! Frank, a glorious and unmatched *consummée*.

“To make, however, a long tale short—for every day's work, although varied to the actors by thousands of minute but un-

narratable particulars, would appear but as a repetition of the last, to the mere listener—to make a long tale short, on the third day he doubled back, took us directly over the same ground—and in the middle of the day, on Saturday, was roused in view by the leading hounds, from the same little swamp in which the five had harbored during the early winter. No man was near the hounds when he broke covert. But fat Tom, who had been detached from the party to bring up provisions from the village, was driving in his sleigh steadily along the road, when the sharp chorus of the hounds aroused him. A minute after, the lame scoundrel limped across the turnpike, scant thirty yards before him. Alas! Tom had but his double-barrel, one loaded with buck shot, the other merely prepared for part-ridge—he blazed away, however, but in vain! Out came ten couple on his track, hard after him; and old Tom, cursing his bad luck, stood to survey the chase across the open.

“Strange was the felon’s fate! The first fence, after he had crossed the road, was full six feet in height, framed of huge split logs, piled so close together that, save between the two topmost rails, a small dog even could have found no passage. Full at this opening the wolf dashed, as fresh, Tom said, as though he had not run a yard; but as he struggled through it, his efforts shook the top rails from the yokes, and the huge piece of timber falling across his loins, pinned him completely! At a mile off I heard his howl myself, and the confused and savage hubbub, as the hounds front and rear, assailed him.

“Hampered although he was, he battled it out fiercely—ay, heroically—as six of our best hounds maimed for life, and one slain outright, testified.

“Heavens! how the fat man scrambled across the fence! he reached the spot, and, far too much excited to reload his piece and quietly blow out the fierce brute’s brains, fell to belaboring him about the head with his gun-stock, shouting the while and yelling; so that the din of his tongue, mixed with the snails and long howls of the mangled savage, and the fierce baying of the dogs, fairly alarmed me, as I said before, at a mile’s distance.

“As it chanced, Timothy was on the road close by, with Peacock; I caught sight of him, mounted, and spurred on fiercely to the rescue; but when I reached the hill’s brow, all was over. Tom, puffing and panting like a grampus in shoal water, covered—garments and face and hands—with lupine gore, had finished his huge enemy, after he had destroyed his gun, with what he

called a *stick*, but what you and I, Frank, should term a fair-sized tree ; and with his foot upon the brindled monster's neck was quaffing copious rapture from the neck of a quart bottle—once full, but now well nigh exhausted—of his appropriate and cherished beverage.* Thus fell the last wolf on the Hills of Warwick !

“ There, I have finished my yarn, and in good time,” cried Harry, “ for here we are at the bridge, and in five minutes more we shall be at old Tom's door.”

“ A right good yarn !” said Forester ; “ and right well spun, upon my word.”

“ But is it a yarn ?” asked A——, “ or is it intended to be the truth ?”

“ Oh ! the truth,” laughed Frank, “ the truth, as much as Archer *can* tell the truth ; embellished, you understand, embellished !”

“ The truth, strictly,” answered Harry, quietly—“ the truth not embellished. When I tell personal adventures, I am not in the habit of decorating them with falsehood.”

“ I had no idea,” responded the Commodore, “ that there had been any wolves here so recently.”

“ There are wolves here *now*,” said Archer, “ though they are scarce and wary. It was but last year that I rode down over the back-bone of the mountain, on the Pompton road, in the night-time, and that on the third of July, and one fellow followed me along the road till I got quite down into the cultivated country.”

“ The devil he did !”

“ How did you know he was following you ?” exclaimed Frank and the Commodore, almost in a breath.

“ Did you see him ?”

“ Not I—but I heard him howl half a dozen times, and each time nearer than before. When I got out of the hills he was not six hundred yards behind me.”

“ Pleasant, that ! Were you armed ? What did you do ?”

“ It was not really so unpleasant, after all—for I knew that he would not attack me at that season of the year. I had my pistols in my holsters ; and for the rest, I jogged steadily along, taking care to keep my nag in good wind for a spirt, if it should

* The facts and incidents of the lame wolf's death are strictly true, although they were not witnessed by the writer.

be needed. I knew that for three or four miles I could outrun him, if it should come to the worst, though in the end a wolf can run down the fastest horse ; and, as every mile brought me nearer to the settlement, I did not care much about it. Had it been winter, when the brutes are hard pressed for food, and the deep snows are against a horse's speed, it would be a very different thing. Hurrah ! here we are ! Hurrah ! fat Tom ! ahoy ! a-ho-oy !”

THE SUPPER PARTY.

BLITHE, loud and hearty was the welcome of fat Tom, when by the clear view halloa with which Harry drove up to the door at a spanking trot, the horses stopping willingly at the high well-known stoop, he learned who were these his nocturnal visitors. There was a slight tinge of frostiness in the evening air, and a bright blazing fire filled the whole bar-room with a cheerful merry light, and cast a long stream of red lustre from the tall windows, and half-open doorway, but in an instant all that escaped from the last mentioned aperture was totally obstructed, as if the door had been pushed to, by the huge body of mine host.

“ Why, darn it,” he exclaimed, “ if that beant Archer ! and a hull grist of boys he's brought along with him, too, any how. How are you, Harry, who've you got along ? It's so eternal thunderin' dark as I carnt see 'em no how !”

“ Frank and the Commodore, that's all,” Archer replied, “ and how are you, old Corporation ?”

“ Oh ! oh ! I'm most darned glad as you've brought A—— ; you might have left that other critter to home, though, jest as well—we doosn't want him blowin' out his little hide here ; lazin' about, and doin' nothin' day nor night but eat and grumble ; and drink, and drink, as if he'd got a meal-sack in his little guts. Why, Timothy, how be you ?” he concluded, smiting him on the back a downright blow, that would have almost felled an ox, as he was getting out the baggage.

“ Doant thee noo, Measter Draa,” expostulated Tim, “ behaave thyself, man, or Ay'se give thee soomat thou woant loike, I'm thinking. Noo ! send oot yan o' t' nagers, joost to stand till t' nags till Ay lift oot t' boxes !”

“A nigger, is it? darn their black skins! there was a dozen here jest now, a blockin’ up the fire-side, and stinkin’ so no white man could come nearst it, till I got an axe-handle, half an hour or so since, and cleared out the heap of them! Niggers! they’ll be here all of them to-rights, I warrant; where you sees Archer, there’s never no scarceness of dogs and niggers. But come, walk in, boys! walk in, anyhow—Jem’ll be here to rights, and he’s worth two niggers any day, though he’s black-fleshed, I guess, if one was jest to skin the eternal creatur.”

Very few minutes passed before they were all drawn up round the fire, Captain Reade and two or three more making room for them, as they pulled up their chairs about the glowing hearth—having hung up their coats and capes against the wall.

“You’ll be here best, boys,” said Tom, “for a piece—the parlor fire’s not been lit yet this fall, and it is quite cold nights now—but Brower ’ll kindle it up agin supper, for you’ll be wantin’ to eat, all of you, I reckon, you’re sich darned everlastin’ gormandizers.”

“That most undoubtedly we shall,” said Frank, “for it’s past eight now, and the deuce a mouthful have we put into our heads since twelve.”

“Barrin’ the liquor, Frank! barrin’ the liquor—now don’t lie! don’t lie, boy, so ridic’lous—as if I’d known you these six years, and then was a goin’ to believe as you’d not dranked since noon!”

“Why, you old hogshead, you! who wants you to believe anything of the kind—we had one drink at Tom’s, your cousin’s, when we started, but deuce the drop since.”

“That’s just the reason why you’re so snarlish, then, I reckon! Your coppers is got bilin’, leastwise if they beant all biled out—you’d best drink stret away, I guess, afore the bottom of the biler gits left bare—for if it does, and it’s red hot now, boy, you’ll be a blowin’ up, like an old steamboat, when you pumps in fresh water.”

“Well, Tom,” said Archer, “I do not think it would be a bad move to take a drop of something, and a cracker; for I suppose we shall not get supper much short of two hours; and I’m so deuced hungry, that if I don’t get something just to take off the edge, I shall not be able to eat when it does come!”

“I’ll make a pitcher of egg nog; A—— drinks egg nog, I guess, although he’s the poorest drinkin’ man I ever did see. Now, Brower, look alive—the fire’s lit, is it? Well, then, jump

now and feed them poor starvin' bags-a-bones, as Archer calls *dogs*, and tell your mother to git supper. Have you brought anything along to eat or drink, boys—I guess we haven't nothin' in the house!"

"Oh! you be hanged," said Harry, "I've brought a round of cold spiced beef, but I'm not going to cut that up for supper; we shall want it to take along for luncheon—you must *get* something! Oh! by the way, you may let the girls pick half a dozen quail, and broil them, if you choose!"

"Quail! do you say? and where'll I git quail, I'd be pleased to know?"

"Out of that gamebag," answered Harry, deliberately, pointing to the well filled plump net which Timothy had just brought in and hung up on the pegs beside the box-coats. Without a word or syllable the old chap rushed to the wall, seized it, and scarcely pausing to sweep out of the way a large file of "The Spirit," and several numbers of "The Register," emptied it on the table.

"Where the plague, Archer, did you kill them?" he asked, "you didn't kill all them to-day, I guess! One, two, three—why, there's twenty-seven cock, and forty-nine quail! By gin! here's another; just fifty quail, three partridge, and six rabbits; well that's a most all-fired nice mess, I swon; if you killed them to-day you done right well, I tell you—you won't get no such mess of birds here now—but you was two days killing these, I guess!"

"Not we, Tom! Frank and I drove up from York last night, and slept at young Tom's, down the valley—we were out just as soon as it was light, and got the quail, all except fifteen or sixteen, the ruffed grouse and four hares, before twelve o'clock. At twelve the Commodore came up from Nyack, where he left his yacht, and joined us; we got some luncheon, went out again at one, and between that and five bagged all the cock, the balance, as you would call it, of the quail, and the other two bunnies."

"Well, then, you made good work of it, I tell you, and you won't do nothin' like that agin this winter—not in Warwick; but I won't touch them quail—it's a sin to break that bunch—but you don't never care to take the rabbits home, and the old woman's got some beautiful fresh onions—she'll make a stew of them—a smother, as you call it, in a little less than no time, Archer; and I've got half a dozen of them big gray snipe—

English snipe—that I killed down by my little run'-side ; you'll have them roasted with the guts in, I guess ! and then there's a pork-steak and sassagers—and if you don't like that, you can jist go without. Here, Brower, take these to your mother, and tell her to git supper right stret off—and you tell Emma Jane to make some buckwheat cakes for A—— ! he can't sup no how without buckwheat cakes ; and I sets a great store by A—— ! I does, by G—— ! and you needn't laugh, boys, for I doos a darned sight more than what I doos by you."

"That's civil, at all events, and candid," replied Frank ; "and it's consolatory, too, for I can fancy no greater reproach to a man, than to be set store on by you. I do not comprehend at all, how A—— bears up under it. But come, do make that egg-nog that you're chattering about."

"How will I make it, Harry—with beer, or milk, or cider ?"

"All three ! now be off, and don't jaw any more !" answered Archer—"asking such silly questions, as if you did not know better than any of us."

In a few minutes the delicious compound was prepared, and, with a plate of toasted crackers and some right good Orange County butter, was set on a small round stand before the fire ; while from the neighboring kitchen rich fumes began to load the air, indicative of the approaching supper. In the mean time, the wagon was unloaded ; Timothy bustled to and fro ; the parlor was arranged ; the bed-rooms were selected by that worthy ; and everything set out in its own place, so that they could not possibly have been more comfortable in their own houses. The horses had been duly cleaned, and clothed, and fed ; the dogs provided with abundance of dry straw, and a hot mess of milk and meal ; and now, in the far corner of the bar-room, the indefatigable varlet was cleaning the three double guns, as scientifically as though he had served his apprenticeship to a gunsmith.

Just at this moment a heavy foot was heard upon the stoop, succeeded by a whining and a great scratching at the door. "Here comes that Indian, Jem," cried Tom, and as he spoke the door flew open, and in rushed old Whino, the tall black and tan fox-hound, and Bonnybelle, and Blossom, and another large blue-mottled bitch, of the Southern breed. It was a curious sight to observe by how sudden and intuitive an instinct the hounds rushed up to Archer, and fawned upon him, jumping up with their fore-paws upon his knees, and thrusting their

bland smiling faces almost into his face; as he, nothing loath, nor repelling their caresses, discoursed most eloquent dog-language to them, until, excited beyond all measure, old Whino seated himself deliberately on the floor, raised his nose toward the ceiling, and set up a long, protracted, and most melancholy howl, which, before it had attained, however, to its grand climax, was brought to a conclusion by being converted into a sharp and treble yell! a consummation brought about by a smart application of Harry's double-thonged four-horse whip, wielded with all the power of Tom's right arm, and accompanied by a "Git out, now—the whole grist! Kennel! now, kennel! out with them, Jem, consarn you; out with them, and yourself, too! out of this, or I'll put the gad about you, you white Deckerin' nigger you!"

"Come back, when you have put them up, Jem; and mind you don't let them be where they can get at the setters, or they'll be fighting like the devil," interposed Archer—"I want to have a chat with you. By-the-by, Tom, where's Dash—you'd better look out, or the Commodore's dog, Grouse, will eat him before morning—mine will not quarrel with him, but Grouse will to a certainty."

"Then for a sartainty I'll shoot Grouse, and wallop Grouse's master, and that 'ill be two right things done one mornin'; the first would be a most darned right one, any how, and kind too! for then A—— would be forced to git himself a good, nice setter dog, and not go shootin' over a great old fat bustin' pinter, as isn't worth so much as I be to hunt birds!"

"Ha! ha! ha!" shouted the Commodore, whom nothing can, by any earthly means, put out of temper, "ha! ha! ha! I should like to see you shoot Grouse, Tom, for all the store you set by me, you'd get the worst of that game. You had better take Archer's advice, I can tell you."

"Archer's advice, indeed! it's likely now that I'd have left my nice little dog to be spiled by your big brutes, now aint it? Come, come, here's supper."

"Get something to drink, Jem, along with Timothy, an come in when we've got through supper."

"Yes, sir," replied the knight of the cut-throat; "I've got some news to tell you, too, Tom, if you'll wait a bit."

"Cuss you, and your news too," responded Tom, "you're sich a thunderin' liar, there's no knowin' when you do speak

truth. We'll not be losin' our supper for no lies, I guess! Leastways I won't! Come Archer."

And with a right good appetite they walked into the parlor; every thing was in order; every article placed just as it had been when Frank went up to spend his first week in the Woodlands; the gun-case stood on the same chairs below the window; the table by the door was laid out with the same display of powder-flasks, shot-pouches, and accoutrements of all sizes. The liquor-stand was placed by Harry's chair, open, containing the case-bottles, the rummers being duly ranged upon the board, which was well lighted by four tall wax candles, and being laid with Harry's silver, made quite a smart display. The rabbits smoked at the head, smothered in a rich sauce of cream, and nicely shredded onions; the pork chops, thin and crisply broiled, exhaled rich odors at the bottom; the English snipe, roasted to half a turn, and reposing on their neat squares of toast, were balanced by a dish of well-fried sausages, reclining on a bed of mashed potatoes; champagne was on the table, unresined and unwired, awaiting only one touch of the knife to release the struggling spirit from its transparent prison. Few words were spoken for some time, unless it were a challenge to champagne, the corks of which popped frequently and furiously; or a request for another snipe, or another spoonful of the sauce; while all devoted themselves to the work in hand with a sincere and business-like earnestness of demeanor, that proved either the excellence of Tom Draw's cookery, or the efficacy of the Spartan sauce which the sportsmen had brought to assist them at their meal. The last rich drops of the fourth flask were trickling into Tom's wide-lipped rummer, when Harry said,

"Come, we have done, I think, for one night; let's have the eatables removed, and we will have a pipe, and hear what Jem has got to say; and you have told us nothing about birds, either, you old elephant; what do you mean by it? That's right, Tim, now bring in my cigars, and Mr. Forester's cheroots, and cold 'iced water, and boiling-hot water, and sugar, out of my box, and lemons. The shrub is here, and the Scotch whiskey; will you have another bottle of champagne, Tom? No! Well, then, look sharp, Timothy, and send Jem in."

And thereupon Jem entered, thumbing his hat assiduously, and sat down in the corner, by the window, where he was speedily accommodated with a supply of liquor, enough to temper any quantity of clay.

“ Well, Jem,” said Archer, “ unbutton your bag now ; what’s the news ? ”

“ Well, Mr. Aircher, it ben’t no use to tell you on’t, with Tom, there, puttin’ a body out, and swearin’ it’s a lie, and dammin’ a chap up and down. It ben’t no use to tell you, and yet I’d kind o’ like to, but then you won’t believe a fellow, not one on you ! ”

“ *In* course not,” answered Forester ; and at the same instant Tom struck in likewise—

“ It’s a lie, afore you tell it ; it’s a lie, cuss you, and you knows it. I’d sooner take a nigger’s word than yours, Jem, any how, for the darned niggers will tell the truth when they can’t git no good by lyin’, but you, you *will* lie all times ! When the truth would do the best, and you would tell it if you could, you can’t help lyin’ ! ”

“ Shut up, you old thief ; shut up instantly, and let the man speak, will you ; I can see by his face that he has got something to tell ; and as for lying, you beat him at it any day.”

Tom was about to answer, when Harry, who had been eagerly engaged in mixing a huge tumbler-full of strong cold shrub punch, thrust it under his nose, and he, unable to resist the soft seductive odor, seized it incontinently, and neither spoke nor breathed again until the bottom of the rummer was brought parallel to the ceiling ; then, with a deep heart-felt sigh, he set it down ; and, with a calm placid smile, exclaimed, “ Tell on, Jem.” Whereupon that worthy launched into his full tide of narrative, as follows :

“ Well, you sees, Mr. Aircher, I tuk up this mornin’ clean up the old crick side, nigh to Vernon, and then I turned in back of old Squire Vandergriff’s, and druv the mountains clear down here till I reached Rocky Hill ; I’d pretty good sport, too, I tell you ; I shot a big gray fox on Round Top, and started a raal rouser of a red one down in the big swamp, in the bottom, and them sluts did keep the darndest ragin’ you ever did hear tell on. Well, they tuk him clean out across the open, past Andy Joneses, and they skeart up in his stubbles three be vies, I guess, got into one like ! there was a drove of them, I tell you, and then they brought him back to the hills agin, and run him twice clean round the Rocky Hill, and when they came round the last time, the English sluts warn’t half a rod from his tail no how, and so he tried his last chance, and he holed : but ~~ay~~ ! now, Mr. Aircher, by darn, you niver did see nothin’ like

the partridges ; they kept a brushin' up and brushin' up, and treein' every little while ; I guess if I seen one I seen a hundred ; why, I killed seven on 'em with coarse shot up in the pines, and I daredn't shoot exceptin' at their heads. If you'd go up there now, to-morrow, and take the dogs along, I know as you'll git fifty."

"Well, if that's all your news, Jem, I won't give you much for it ; and, as for going into the mountains to look after partridges, you don't catch me at it, that's all !" said Harry. "Is that all ?"

"Not by a great shot !" answered Jem, grinning, "but the truth is, I know you won't believe me ; but I can tell you what, you can kill a big fat buck, if you'll git up a little afore daylight !"

"A buck, Jem ! a buck near here ?" inquired Forester and Archer in a breath.

"I told you, boys, the critter couldn't help it ; he's stuck to truth just so long, and he was forced to lie, or else he would have busted !"

"It's true, by thunder," answered Jem ; "I wish I mayn't eat nor drink nother, if there's one bit of lie in it ; d—n the bit, Tom ! I'm in airnest, now, right down ; and you knows as I wouldn't go to lie about it !"

"Well ! well ! where was't, Jem ?"

"Why, he lies, I guess, *now*, in that little thickest swamp of all, jist in the eend of the swale atween Round Top and Rocky Hill, right in the pines and laurels ; leastways I druv him down there with the dogs, and I swon that he never crossed into the open meadow ; and I went round, and made a circle like clean round about him, and darn the dog trailed on him no how ; and bein' as he's hard hot, I guess he'll stay there since he harbored."

"Hard hit, is he ! why, did you get a shot at him ?"

"A fair one," Jem replied ; "not three rod off from me ; he jumped up out of the channel of Stony Brook, where, in a sort o' bend, there was a lot of bushes, sumach and winter-green, and ferns ; he skeart me, that's a fact, or I'd a killed him. He warn't ten yards off when he bounced up first, but I pulled without cocking, and when I'd got my gun fixed, he'd got off a little piece, and I'd got nauthen but fox-shot, but I hot him jist in the side of the flank ; the blood flew out like winkin', and the hounds arter him like mad, up and down, and round and back,

and he a kind of weak like, and they'd overhauled him once and again, and tackled him, but there was only four on them, and so he beat them off like every time, and onned again! They couldn't hold him no how, till I got up to them, and I couldn't fix it no how, so as I'd git another shot at him; but it was growin' dark fast, and I flogged off the sluts arter a deal o' work, and viewed him down the old blind run-way into th swale eend, where I telled you; and then I laid still quite a piece; and then I circled round, to see if he'd quit it, and not one dog tuk track on him, and so I feels right sartain as he's in that hole now, and will be in the mornin', if so be we goes there in time, afore the sun's up."

"That we can do easily enough," said Archer, "what do you say, Tom? Is it worth while?"

"Why," answered old Draw instantly, "if so be only we could be sartain that the darned critter warn't a lyin', there couldn't be no doubt about it; for if the buck did lay up there this night, why he'll be there to-morrow; and if so be he's there, why we can get him sure!"

"Well, Jem, what have you got to say now," said the Commodore; "is it the truth or no?"

"Why, darn it all," retorted Jem, "harn't I just told you it was true; it's most blamed hard a fellow can't be believed now—why, Mr Aircher, did I ever lie to you?"

"Oh! if you ask me that," said Harry, "you know I must say 'Yes!'—for you have, fifty times at the least computation. Do you remember the day you towed me up the Decker's run to look for woodcock?"

"And you found nothing," interrupted Tom, "but——"

"Oh shut up, do, Tom," broke in Forester, "and let us hear about this buck. If we agree to give you a five dollar bill, Jem, in case we do find him where you say, what will you be willing to forfeit if we do not?"

"You may shoot at me!" answered Jem, "all on you—ivery one on you—at forty yards, with rifle or buckshot!"

"It certainly is very likely that we should be willing to get hanged for the sake of shooting such a mangy hound as you, Jem," answered Forester, "when one could shoot a good clean dog—Tom's Dash, for example—for nothing!"

"Could you though?" Tom replied, "I'd like to catch you at it, my dear boy—I'd wax the little-hide off of you. But come, let us be settling. Is it a lie now, Jem; speak out—is

it a lie, consarn you? for if it be, you'd best jest say 't out now, and save your bones to-morrow. Well, boys, the critter's sulky, so most like it is true—and I guess we'll be arter him. We'll be up bright and airly, and go a horseback, and if he be there, we can kill him in no time at all, and be right back to breakfast. I'll start Jem and the captain here, and Dave Seers, ith the dogs, an hour afore us! and let them come right down he swale, and drive him to the open—Harry and Forester, you two can ride your own nags, and I'll take old Roan, and A—— here shall have the colt."

"Very well! Timothy, did they feed well to-night? if they did, give them their oats very early, and no water. I know it's too bad after their work to-day, but we shall not be out two hours!"

"Weel! it's no matter gin they were oot six," responded Timothy, "they wadna be a pin the waur o't!"

"Take out my rifle, then—and pick some buckshot cartridges to fit the bore of all the double guns. Frank's got his rifle; so you can take my heavy single gun—your gauge is 17, A——, quite too small for buckshot; mine is 11, and will do its work clean with Ely's cartridge and pretty heavy powder, at eighty-five to ninety yards. Tom's bore is twelve, and I've brought some to fit his old double, and some, too, for my own gun, though it is almost too small!"

"What gauge is yours, Harry?"

"Fourteen; which I consider the very best bore possible for general shooting. I think the gunsmiths are running headlong now into the opposite of their old error—when they found that fifteens and fourteens outshot vastly the old small calibres—fifty years since no guns were larger than eighteen, and few than twenty; they are now quite out-doing it. I have seen late-imported guns of seven pounds, and not above twenty-six inches long, with eleven and even ten gauge calibres! you might as well shoot with a blunderbus at once!"

"They would tell at cock in close summer covert," answered A——.

"For a man who can't cover his bird they might," replied Harry; "but you may rely on it they lose three times as much in force as they gain in the space they cover; at forty yards you could not kill even a woodcock with them once in fifty times, and a quail, or English snipe, at that distance never!"

"What do you think the right length and weight, then, for an eleven bore?"

“Certainly not less than nine pounds, and thirty inches; but I would prefer ten pounds and thirty-three inches; though, except for a fowl-gun to use in boat-shooting, such a piece would be quite too ponderous and clumsy. My single gun is eleven gauge, eight pounds and thirty-three inches; and even with loose shot executes superbly; but with Ely’s *green* cartridge I have put forty BB shot into a square of two and a half feet at one hundred and twenty-five yards; sharply enough, too, to imbed the shot so firmly in the fence against which I had fixed my mark, that it required a good strong knife to get them out. This I propose that you should use to-morrow, with a $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz. SG cartridge, which contains eighteen buck-shot, and which, if you get a shot any where within a hundred yards, will kill him as dead, I warrant it, as an ounce bullet.”

“Which you intend to try, I fancy,” added Frank.

“Not quite! my rifle carries eighteen only to the pound; and yours, if I forget not, only thirty-two.”

“But mine is double.”

“Never mind that; thirty-two will not execute with certainty above a hundred and fifty yards!”

“And how far in the devil’s name would you have it execute, as you calls it,” asked old Tom.

“Three hundred!” replied Harry, coolly.

“Thunder!” replied Draw, “don’t tell me no sich thunderin’ nonsense; I’ll stand all day and be shot at, like a Christmas turkey, at sixty rods, for six-pence a shot, any how.”

“I’ll bet you all the liquor we can drink while we are here, Tom,” answered Harry, “that I hit a four foot target at three hundred yards to-morrow!”

“Off hand?” inquired Tom, with an attempt at a sneer.

“Yes, off hand! and no shot to do that either; I know men—lots of them—who would bet to hit a foot* square at that distance!”

* When this was written strong exception was taken to it by a Southern writer in the *Spirit of the Times*. Had that gentleman known what is the practice of the heavy Tyrolese rifle he would not have written so confidently. But it is needless to go so far as to the Tyrol. There is a well known rifle-shot in New York, who can perform the feat, any day, which the Southern writer scoffed at as utterly impossible.

Scrope on Deerstalking will show to any impartial reader’s satisfaction, that stags in the Highlands are rarely killed within 200 and generally beyond 300 yards’ distance.

"Well! you can't hit four, *no how!*"

"Will you bet?"

"Sartain!"

"Very well—Done—Twenty dollars I will stake against all the liquor we drink while we're here. Is it a bet?"

"Yes! Done!" cried Tom—"at the first shot, you know; I gives no second chances."

"Very well, as you please!—I'm sure of it, that's all—Lord, Frank, how we will drink and treat—I shall invite all the town up here to-morrow—Come!—One more round for luck, and then to bed!"

"Content!" cried A——; "but I mean Mr. Draw to have an argument to-morrow night about this point of Setter *vs.* Pointer! How do you say, Harry?—which is best?"

"Oh! I'll be Judge and Jury,"—answered Archer—"and you shall plead before me; and I'll make up my mind in the meantime!"

"He's for me, any how,"—shouted Tom—"Darn it all, Harry, you knows you wouldn't own a pinter—no, not if it was gin you!"

"I believe you are about right there, old fellow, so far as this country goes at least!"—said Archer—"different dogs for different soils and seasons—and, in my judgment, setters are far the best this side the Atlantic—but it is late now, and I can't stand chattering here—good night—you shall have as much dog-talk as you like to-morrow."

THE OUTLYING STAG.

It was still pitch dark, although the skies were quite clear and cloudless, when Harry, Frank, and the Commodore re-assembled on the following morning, in Tom's best parlor, preparatory to the stag hunt which, as determined on the previous night, was to be their first sporting move in the valley.

Early, however, as it was, Timothy had contrived to make a glorious fire upon the hearth, and to lay out a slight breakfast of biscuits, butter, and cold beef, flanked by a square case-bottle of Jamaica, and a huge jorum of boiled milk. Tom Draw had not yet made his appearance, but the sound of his ponderous tramp,

mixed with strange oaths and loud vociferations, showed that he was on foot, and ready for the field.

"I'll tell you what, Master A——," said Archer, as he stood with his back to the fire, mixing some rum with sugar and cold water, previous to pouring the hot milk into it—"You'll be so cold in that light jacket on the stand this morning, that you'll never be able to hold your gun true, if you get a shot. It froze quite hard last night, and there's some wind, too, this morning."

"That's very true," replied the Commodore, "but devil a thing have I got else to wear, unless I put on my great coat, and that's too much the other way—too big and clumsy altogether. I shall do well enough, I dare say; and after all, my drilling jacket is not much thinner than your fustian."

"No," said Harry, "but you don't fancy that I'm going out in this, do you? No! no! I'm too old a hand for that sort of thing—I know that to shoot well, a man must be comfortable, and I mean to be so. Why, man, I shall put on my Canadian hunting shirt over this"—and with the word he slipped a loose frock, shaped much like a wagoner's smock, or a Flemish blouse, over his head, with large full sleeves, reaching almost to his knees, and belted round his waist, by a broad worsted sash. This excellent garment was composed of a thick coarse home-spun woollen, bottle-green in color, with fringe and bindings of dingy red, to match the sash about his waist. From the sash was suspended an otter skin pouch, containing bullets and patches, nipple wrench and turn-screw, a bit of dry tow, an oiled rag, and all the indispensables for rifle cleaning; while into it were thrust two knives—one a broad two-edged implement, with a stout buck-horn haft, and a blade of at least twelve inches—the other a much smaller weapon, not being, hilt and all, half the length of the other's blade, but very strong, sharp as a razor, and of surpassing temper. While he was fitting all these in their proper places, and slinging under his left arm a small buffalo horn of powder, he continued talking—

"Now," he said, "if you take my advice, you'll go into my room, and there, hanging against the wall, you'll find my winter shooting jacket, I had it made last year when I went up to Maine, of pilot cloth, lined throughout with flannel. It will fit you just as well as your own, for we're pretty much of a size. Frank, there, will wear his old monkey jacket, the skirts of which he razeed last winter for the very purpose. Ah, here is

Brower—just run up, Brower, and bring down my shooting jacket off the wall from behind the door—look sharp, will you! Now, then, I shall load, and I advise you both to do likewise; for it's bad work doing that same with cold fingers."

Thus saying, he walked to the corner, and brought out his rifle, a short heavy double barrel, with two grooves only, carrying a bitted ball of twelve to the pound, quite plain but exquisitely finished. Before proceeding, however, to load, he tried the passage of the nipple with a fine needle—three or four of which, thrust into a cork, and headed with sealing wax, formed a portion of the contents of his pouch—brushed the cone, and the inside of the hammer, carefully, and wiped them, to conclude, with a small piece of clean white kid—then measuring his powder out exactly, into a little charger, screwed to the end of his ramrod, he inverted the piece, and introduced the rod upward till the cup reached the chamber; when, righting the gun, he withdrew it, leaving the powder all lodged safely at the breech, without the loss of a single grain in the groovings. Next, he chose out a piece of leather, the finest grained kid, without a seam or wrinkle, slightly greased with the best watch-maker's oil—selected a ball perfectly round and true—laid the patch upon the muzzle, and placing the bullet exactly in the centre over the bore, buried it with a single rap of a small *lignum vitæ* mallet, which hung from his button-hole; and then, with but a trifling effort, drove it home by one steady thrust of the stout copper-headed charging rod. This done, he again inspected the cone, and seeing that the powder was forced quite up into sight, picked out, with the same anxious scrutiny that had marked all of his proceedings, a copper cap, which he pronounced sure to go, applied it to the nipple, crushed it down firmly, with the hammer, which he then drew back to half-cock, and bolted. Then he set the piece down by the fireside, drained his hot jorum, and—

"That fellow will do his work, and no mistake," said he. "Now A——, here is my single gun"—handing to him, as he spoke, one of the handsomest Westley Richards a sportsman ever handled—"thirty-three inches, nine pounds and eleven gauge. Put in one-third above that charger, which is its usual load, and one of those green cartridges, and I'll be bound that it will execute at eighty paces; and that is more than Master Frank there can say for his Manton Rifle, at least if he loads it

with bullets patched in that slovenly and most unsportsmanlike fashion."

"I should like to know what the deuce you mean by slovenly and unsportsmanlike," said Frank, pulling out of his breast pocket a couple of bullets, carefully sewed up in leather—"it is the best plan possible, and saves lots of time—you see I can just shove my balls in at once, without any bother of fitting patches."

"Yes," replied Harry, "and five to one the seam, which, however neatly it is drawn, must leave a slight ridge, will cross the direction of the grooving, and give the ball a counter movement; either destroying altogether the rotatory motion communicated by the rifling, or causing it to take a direction quite out of the true line; accordingly as the counteraction is conveyed near the breech, or near the muzzle of the piece."

"Will so trifling a cause produce so powerful an effect?" inquired the Commodore.

"The least variation, whether of concavity or convexity in the bullet, will do so unquestionably—and I cannot see why the same thing in a covering superinduced to the ball should not have the same effect. Even a hole in a pellet of shot, will cause it to leave the charge, and fly off at a tangent. I was once shooting in the fens of the Isle of Ely, and fired at a mallard sixty or sixty-five yards off, with double B shot, when to my great amazement a workman—digging peat at about the same distance from *me* with the bird, but at least ninety yards to the right of the mallard—roared out lustily that I had killed him. I saw that the drake was knocked over as dead as a stone, and consequently laughed at the fellow, and set it down as a cool trick to extort money, not uncommon among the fen men, as applied to members of the University. I had just finished loading, and my retriever had just brought in the dead bird, which was quite riddled, cut up evidently by the whole body of the charge—both the wings broken, one in three places, one leg almost dissevered, and several shots in the neck and body—when up came my friend, and sure enough he was hit—one pellet had struck him on the cheek bone, and was imbedded in the skin. Half a crown, and a lotion of whiskey—not applied to the part, but taken inwardly—soon proved a sovereign medicine, and picking out the shot with the point of a needle, I found a hole in it big enough to admit a pin's head, and about the twentieth part of an inch in depth. This I should think is proof enough

for you—but, besides this, I have seen bullets in pistol-shooting play strange vagaries, glancing off from the target at all sorts of queer angles.”

“Well! well!” replied Frank, “my rifle shoots true enough for me—true enough to kill generally—and who the deuce can be at the bother of your pragmatistical preparations! I am sure it might be said of you, as it was of James the First, of most pacific and pedantic memory, that you are ‘Captain of arts and Clerk of arms’—at least you are a very pedant in gunnery.”

“No! no!” said A——; “you’re wrong there altogether, Master Forester; there is nothing on earth that makes so great a difference in sportsmanship as the observation of small things. I don’t call him a sportsman who can walk stoutly, and kill well, unless he can give causes for effects—unless he knows the haunts and habits both of his game and his dogs—unless he can give a why for every wherefore!”

“Then devil a bit will you ever call me one,”—answered Frank—“For I can’t be at the trouble of thinking about it.”

“Stuff—humbug—folly”—interrupted Archer—“you know a great deal better than that—and so do we, too!—you’re only cranky! a little cranky, Frank, and given to defending any folly you commit without either rhyme or reason—as when you tried to persuade me that it is the safest thing in nature to pour gunpowder out of a canister into a pound flask, with a lighted cigar between your teeth; to demonstrate which you had scarcely screwed the top of the horn on, before the lighted ashes fell all over it—had they done so a moment sooner, we should all have been blown out of the room.”

By this time, the Commodore had donned Harry’s winter jacket, and Frank, grumbling and paradoxizing all the while, had loaded his rifle, and buttoned up his pea-jacket, when in stalked Tom, swathed up to his chin in a stout dreadnought coat.

“What are ye lazin’ here about!” he shouted, “you’re niver ready no how. Jem’s been agone these two hours, and we’ll jest be too late, and miss gittin’ a shot—if so be there be a buck—which I’ll be sworn there arn’t!”

“Ha! ha!” the Commodore burst out; “ha! ha! ha! I should like to know which side the laziness has been on this morning, Mister Draw.”

“On little wax skin’s there,” answered the old man, as quick as lightning; “the little snoopin’ critter carn’t find his gloves now; though the nags is at the door, and we all ready. We’ll

drink, boys, while he's lookin' arter 'em—and then when he's found *them*, and's jest a gittin' on his horse, he'll find he's left his powder-horn or knife, or somethin' else, behind him; and then we'll drink agin, while he snoops back to fetch it."

"You be hanged, you old rascal," replied Forester, a little bothered by the huge shouts of laughter which followed this most strictly accurate account of his accustomed method of proceeding; an account which, by the way, was fully justified not twenty minutes afterward, by his galloping back, neck or nothing, to get his pocket handkerchief, which he had left "*in course*," as Tom said, in his dressing-gown beside the fire.

"Come, bustle—bustle!" Harry added, as he put on his hunting cap and pulled a huge pair of fen boots on, reaching to the mid thigh, which Timothy had garnished with a pair of bright English spurs. In another minute they were all on horseback, trotting away at a brisk pace toward the little glen, wherein, according to Jem's last report, the stag was harbored. It was in vain that during their quick ride the old man was entreated to inform them where they were to take post, or what they were to do, as he would give them no reply, nor any information whatever.

At last, however, when Forester rejoined them, after his return to the village, he turned short off from the high road to the left, and as he passed a set of bars into a wild hill pasture, struck into a hard gallop.

Before them lay the high and ridgy head of Round Top, his flanks sloping toward them, in two broad pine-clad knobs, with a wild streamlet brawling down between them, and a thick tangled swamp of small extent, but full of tall dense thornbushes, matted with vines and cat-briers, and carpeted with a rich undergrowth of fern and wintergreen, and whortleberries. To the right and left of the two knobs or spurs just mentioned, were two other deep gorges, or dry channels, bare of brushwood, and stony—rock-walled, with steep precipitous ledges toward the mountain, but sloping easily up to the lower ridges. As they reached the first of these, Tom motioned Forester to stop.

"Stand here," he whispered, "close in here, jest behind this here crag—and look out hereaways toward the village. If he comes down this runway, kill him, but mind you doosn't show a hair out of this corner; for Archer, he'll stand next, and if so be he crosses from the swamp hole hereaways, you'll chance to

get a bullet. Be still, now, as a mouse, and tie your horse here in the cove!—Now, lads”—

And off he set again, rounded the knob, and making one slight motion toward the nook, wherein he wished that Harry should keep guard, wheeled back in utter silence, and very slowly—for they were close to the spot wherein, as they supposed, the object of their chase was laid up; and as yet but two of his paths were guarded toward the plain; Jem and his comrades having long since got with the hounds into his rear, and waiting only for the rising of the sun to lay them on, and push along the channel of the brook.

This would compel him to break covert, either directly from the swamp, or by one of the dry gorges mentioned. Now, therefore, was the crisis of the whole matter; for if—before the other passes were made good—the stag should take alarm, he might steal off without affording a chance of a shot, and get into the mountains to the right, where they might hunt him for a week in vain.

No marble statue could stand more silently or still than Harry and his favorite gray, who, with erected ears and watchful eye, trembling a little with excitement, seemed to know what he was about, and to enjoy it no less keenly than his rider. Tom and the Commodore, quickening their pace as they got out of ear-shot, retraced their steps quite back to the turnpike road, along which Harry saw them gallop furiously, in a few minutes, and turn up, half a mile off, toward the further gulley—he saw no more, however; though he felt certain that the Commodore was, scarce ten minutes after he lost sight of them, standing within twelve paces of him, at the further angle of the swamp—Tom having warily determined that the two single guns should take post together, while the two doubles should be placed where the wild quarry could get off encountering but a single sportsman.

It was a period of intense excitement before the sun rose though it was of short duration—but scarcely had his first rays touched the open meadow, casting a huge gray shadow from the rounded hill which covered half the valley, while all the farther slope was laughing in broad light, the mist wreaths curling up, thinner and thinner every moment, from the broad streamlet in the bottom, which here and there flashed out exultingly from its wood-covered margins—scarcely had his first rays topped the hill, before a distant shout came swelling on

the air, down the ravine, announcing Jem's approach. No hound gave tongue, however, nor did a rustle in the brake, or any sound of life, give token of the presence of the game—louder and nearer drew the shouts—and now Harry himself began to doubt if there were any truth in Jem's relation, when suddenly the sharp, quick crack of Forester's rifle gave token that the game was afoot—a loud yell from that worthy followed.

“Look out! Mark—back—mark back!”

And keenly Archer did look out, and warily did he listen—once he detected, or fancied he detected, a rustling of the under-wood, and the crack of a dry stick, and dropping his reins on the horse's neck, he cocked his rifle—but the sound was not repeated, nor did any thing come into sight—so he let down the hammer once again, and resumed his silent watch, saying to himself—

“Frank fired too quick, and he has headed up the brook to Jem. If he is forward enough now, we shall have him back instantly, with the hounds at his heels; but if he has loitered and hung back, ‘over the hills and far away’ is the word for this time.”

But Jem was in his place, and in another moment a long whoop came ringing down the glen, and the shrill yelping rally of the hounds as they all opened on a view together! Fiercer and wilder grew the hubbub! And now the eager watcher might hear the brushwood torn in all directions by the impetuous passage of the wild deer and his inveterate pursuers.

“Now, then, it is old Tom's chance, or ours,” he thought, “for he will not try Forester again, I warrant him, and we are all down wind of him—so he can't judge of our whereabouts.”

In another second the bushes crashed to his left hand, and behind him, while the dogs were raving scarcely a pistol-shot off, in the tangled swamp. Yet he well knew that if the stag should break there it would be A——'s shot, and, though anxious, he kept his eye fixed steadily on his own point, holding his good piece cocked and ready.

“Mark! Harry, mark him!”—a loud yell from the Commodore.

The stag had broken midway between them, in full sight of A——, and seeing him, had wheeled off to the right. He was now sweeping onward across the open field with high graceful bounds, tossing his antlered head aloft, as if already safe, and little hurt, if anything, by Jem Lyn's boasted shot of the last evening. The gray stood motionless, trembling, however, pal-

pably, in every limb, with eagerness—his ears laid flat upon his neck, and cowering a little, as if he feared the shot, which it would seem his instinct told him to expect. Harry had dropped his reins once more, and levelled his unerring rifle—yet for a moment's space he paused, waiting for A—— to fire; there was no hurry for himself, nay, a few seconds more would give him a yet fairer shot, for the buck now was running partially toward him, so that a moment more would place him broadside on, and within twenty paces.

“Bang!” came the full and round report of A——’s large shot-gun, fired before the beast was fifteen yards away from him. He had aimed at the head, as he was forced to do, lest he should spoil the haunches, for he was running now directly from him—and had the buck been fifty paces off he would have killed him dead, lodging his whole charge, or the best part of it, in the junction of the neck and skull—but as it was, the cartridge—the *green* cartridge—had not yet spread at all; nor had one buckshot left the case! Whistling like a single ball, as it passed Harry’s front eight or nine yards off, it drove, as his quick eye discovered, clean through the stag’s right ear, almost dissevering it, and making the animal bound six feet off the green sward.

Just as he touched the earth again, alighting from his mighty spring, with an aim sure and steady, and a cool practised finger, the marksman drew his trigger, and, quick, as light, the piece—well loaded, as its dry crack announced—discharged its ponderous missile! But, bad luck on it, even at that very instant, just in the point of time wherein the charge was ignited, eighteen or twenty quail, flushed by the hubbub of the hounds, rose with a loud and startling whirr, on every side of the gray horse, under his belly and about his ears, so close as almost to brush him with their wings—he bolted and reared up—yet even at that disadvantage the practised rifleman missed not his aim entirely, though he erred somewhat, and the wound in consequence was not quite deadly.

The ball, which he had meant for the heart, his sight being taken under the fore-shoulder, was raised and thrown forward by the motion of the horse, and passed clean through the neck close to the blade bone. Another leap, wilder and loftier than the last! yet still the stag dashed onward, with the blood gushing out in streams from the wide wound, though as yet neither

speed nor strength appeared to be impaired, so fleetly did he scour the meadow.

"He will cross Frank yet!" cried Archer. "Mark! mark him, Forester!"

But, as he spoke, he set his rifle down against the fence, and holloed to the hounds, which instantly, obedient to his well known and cheery whoop, broke covert in a body, and settled heads up and sterns down, to the blazing scent.

At the same moment A—— came trotting out from his post, gun in hand; while at a thundering gallop, blaspheming awfully as he came on, and rating them for "know-nothings, and blunderin' eternal spoil-sports," Tom rounded the farther hill, and spurred across the level. By this time they were all in sight of Forester, who stood on foot, close to his horse, in the mouth of the last gorge, the buck running across him sixty yards off, and quartering a little from him toward the road; the hounds were, however, all midway between him and the quarry, and as the ground sloped steeply from the marksman, he was afraid of firing low—but took a long, and, as it seemed, sure aim at the head.

The rifle flashed—a tine flew, splintered by the bullet, from the brow antler, not an inch above the eye.

"Give him the other!" shouted Archer. "Give him the other barrel!"

But Frank shook his head spitefully, and dropped the muzzle of his piece.

"By thunder! then, he's forgot his bullets—and hadu't nothen to load up agen, when he missed the first time!"

"Ha! ha! ha!" roared once again the Commodore—"ha! ha! hah!—ha! ha!" till rock and mountain rang again.

"By the Eternal!" exclaimed Draw, perfectly frantic with passion and excitement—"By thunder! A——, I guess you'd laugh if your best friends was all a dyin' at your feet. You would for sartain! But look, look!—what the plague's Harry goin' at?"

For when he saw that Forester had now, for some reason or other, no farther means of stopping the stag's career, Archer had set spurs to his horse, and dashed away at a hard furious gallop after the wounded buck. The hounds, which had lost sight of it as it leaped a high stone wall with much brush round the base of it, were running fast and furious on the scent—but still, though flagging somewhat in his speed, the stag was leaving them. He had turned, as the last shot struck his horns, down

hill, as if to cross the valley; but immediately, as if perceiving that he had passed the last of his enemies, turned up again toward the mountain, describing an arc, almost, in fact, a semi-circle, from the point where he had broken covert to that—another gully, at perhaps a short mile's distance—from which he was now aiming.

Across the chord, then, of this arc, Harry was driving furiously, with the intent, as it would seem, to cut him off from the gully—the stone wall crossed his line, but not a second did he pause for it, but gave his horse both spurs, and lifting him a little, landed him safely at the other side. Frank mounted rapidly, dashed after him, and soon passed A——, who was less aptly mounted for a chase—he likewise topped the wall, and disappeared beyond it, though the stones flew, where the bay struck the coping with his heels.

All pluck to the back-bone, the Commodore craned not nor hesitated, but dashed the colt, for the first time in his life, at the high barrier—he tried to stop, but could not, so powerfully did his rider cram him—leaped short, and tumbled head over heels, carrying half the wall away with him, and leaving a gap as if a wagon had passed through it—to Tom's astonishment and agony—for he supposed the colt destroyed forever.

Scarcely, however, had A—— gained his feet, before a sight met his eyes, which made him leave the colt, and run as fast as his legs could carry him toward the scene of action.

The stag, seeing his human enemy so near, had strained every nerve to escape, and Harry, desperately rash and daring, seeing he could not turn or head him, actually spurred upon him counter to broadside, in hope to ride him down; foiled once again, in this—his last hope, as it seemed—he drew his longest knife, and as—a quarter of a second too late only—he crossed behind the buck, he swung himself half out of his saddle, and striking a full blow, succeeded in hamstringing him; while the gray, missing the support of the master-hand, stumbled and fell upon his head.

Horse, stag, and man, all rolled upon the ground within the compass of ten yards—the terrified and wounded deer striking out furiously in all directions—so that it seemed impossible that Archer could escape some deadly injury—while, to increase the fury and the peril of the scene, the hounds came up, and added their fresh fierceness to the fierce confusion. Before, however, A—— came up, Harry had gained his feet, drawn his

small knife—the larger having luckily flown many yards as he fell—and running in behind the struggling quarry, had seized the brow antler, and at one strong and skilful blow, severed the weasand and the jugular. One gush of dark red gore—one plunging effort, and the superb and stately beast lay motionless forever—while the loud death halloo rang over the broad valley—all fears, all perils, utterly forgotten in the strong apture of that thrilling moment.

SNIPE ON THE UPLAND.

“Now then, boys, we’ve no time to lose,” said Archer, as he replaced his knives, which he had been employed in wiping with great care, in their respective scabbards, “it’s getting toward eight o’clock, and I feel tolerably peckish, the milk punch and biscuits notwithstanding; we shall not be in the field before ten o’clock, do our best for it. Now, Jem,” he continued, as that worthy, followed by David Seers and the Captain made their appearance, hot and breathless, but in high spirits at the glorious termination of the morning’s sport—“Now, Jem, you and the Captain must look out a good strong pole, and tie that fellow’s legs, and carry him between you as far as Blain’s house—you can come up with the wagon this afternoon and bring him down to the village. What the deuce are you pottering at that colt about, Tom? He’s not hurt a pin’s value, on the contrary—”

“Better for ’t, I suppose, you’ll be a tellin’ me to-rights; better for that all-fired eternal tumble, aint he?” responded the fat chap, with a lamentable attempt at an ironical smile, put on to hide his real chagrin.

“*In* course he is,” replied Frank, who had recovered his wonted equanimity, and who, having been most unmercifully rallied by the whole party for leaving his bullets at home, was glad of an opportunity to carry the war into the enemy’s country, “*in* course he is a great deal better—if a thing can be said to be better which, under all circumstances, is so infernally *bad*, as that brute. I should think he *was* better for it. Why, by the time he’s had half a dozen more such purls, he’ll leap a six foot fence without shaking a loose rail. In fact, I’ll bet a

dollar I carry him back over that same wall without touching a stone." And, as he spoke, he set his foot into the stirrup, as if he were about to put his threat into immediate execution.

"Quit, Forester—quit, I say—quit, now—consarn the hide on you"—shouted the fat man, now in great tribulation, and apprehending a second edition of the tumble—"quit foolin', or by h—I'll put a grist of shot, or one of they green cartridges into you stret away—I will, by the Eternal!" and as he spoke he dropped the muzzle of his gun, and put his thumb upon the cock.

"I say quit foolin'. too," cried Harry, "both of you quit it; you old fool, Tom, do you really suppose he is mad enough to ride that brute of yours again at the wall?"

"Mad enough!—Yes, I swon he be," responded Tom; "both of you be as mad as the hull Asylum down to York. If Frank arn't mad, then there aint such a word as mad!" But as he spoke he replaced his gun under his arm, and walked off to his horse, which he mounted, without farther words, his example being followed by the whole party, who set off on the spur, and reached the village in less than half an hour.

Breakfast was on the table when they got there—black tea, produced from Harry's magazine of stores, rich cream, hot bread, and Goshen butter—eggs in abundance, boiled, roasted, fried with ham—an omelet *au fines herbes*, no inconsiderable token of Tim's culinary skill—a cold round of spiced beef, and last, not least, a dish of wood-duck hot from the gridiron.

"By George," said Harry, "here's a feast for an epicure, and I can find the appetite."

"Find it"—said Forester, grinning, who, pretending to eat nothing, or next to nothing, and not to care what was set before him, was really the greatest *gourmet* and heaviest feeder of the party—"Find it, Harry? it's quite new to me that you ever *lost* it. When was it, hey?"

"Arter he'd eat a hull roast pig, I reckon—leastwise that *might* make Harry lose his'n; but I'll be darned if *two* would be a sarcumstance to set before *you*, Frank, no how. Here's A——, too, he don't never eat."

"These wood-duck are delicious," answered the Commodore, who was very busily employed in stowing away his provant, "What a capital bird it is, Harry."

"Indeed, is it," said he, "and this is, *me judice*, the very best way to eat it, red hot from the gridiron, cooked very quick,

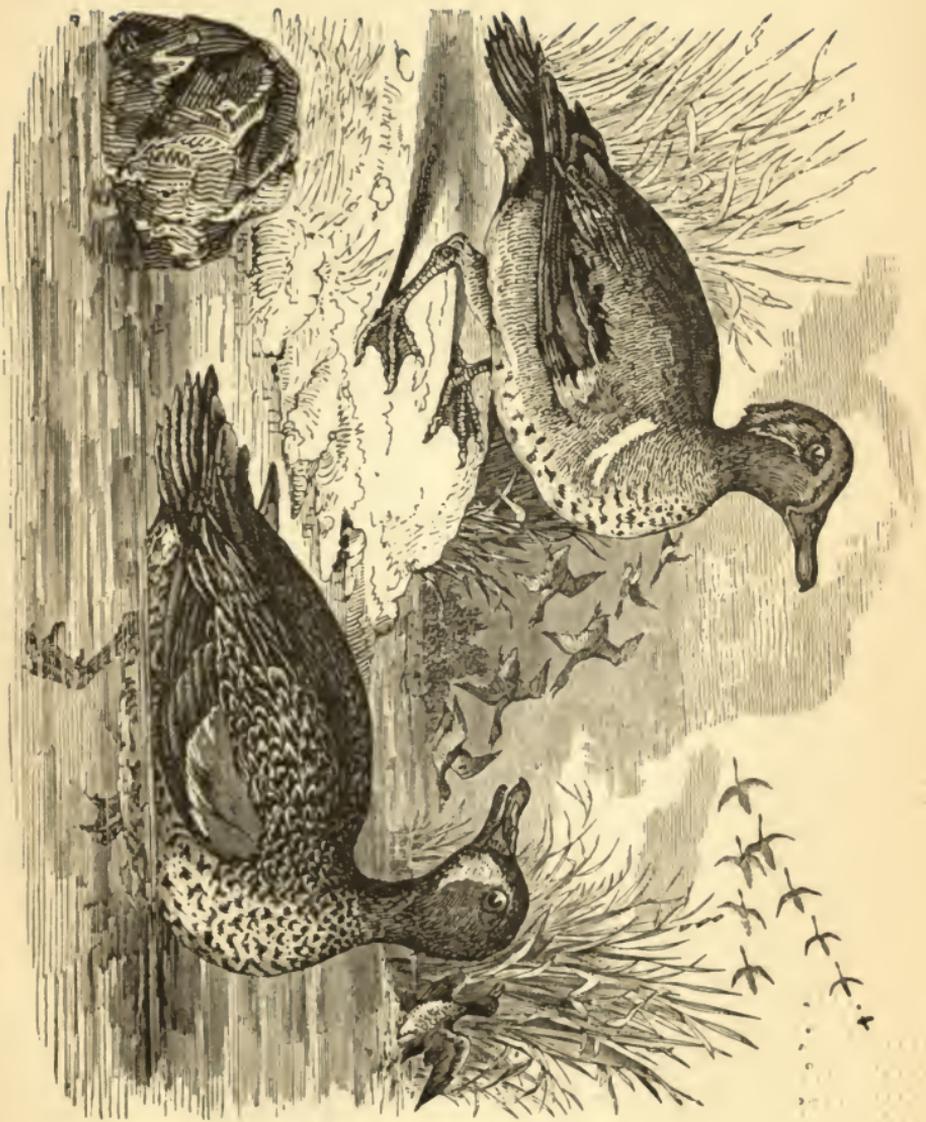
and *brown* on the outside, and full of gravy when you cut; with a squeeze of a lemon and a dash of cayenne it is sublime. What say you, Forester?"

"Oh, you wont ketch him sayin' nauthen, leastwise not this half hour—but the way he'll keep a feedin' wont be slow, I tell you—that's the way to judge how Forester likes his grub—*jest see* how he takes hold on 't."

"Are there many wood-duck about this season, Tom?" asked Forester, affecting to be perfectly careless and indifferent to all that had passed. "Did you kill these yourself?"

"There was a sight on them a piece back, but they're gittin' scarce—pretty scarce now, I tell you. Yes, I shot these down by Aunt Sally's big spring-hole a Friday. I'd been a lookin' round, you see, to find where the quail kept afore you came up here—for I'd a been expectin' you a week and better—and I'd got in quite late, toward sundown, with an outsidin' bevy, down by the cedar swamp, and druv them off into the big bog meadows, below Sugar-loaf, and I'd killed quite a bunch on them—sixteen, I reckon, Archer; and there wasn't but eighteen when I lit on 'em—and it was gittin' pretty well dark when I came to the big spring, and little Dash was worn dead out, and I was tired, and hot, and thunderin' thirsty, so I sets down aside the outlet where the spring water comes in good and cool, and I was mixin' up a nice long drink in the big glass we hid last summer down in the mudhole, with some *great* cider sperirts—when what should I hear all at once but whistle, whistlin' over head, the wings of a whole drove on 'em, so up I buckled the old gun; but they'd plumped down into the crick fifteen rod off or better, down by the big pin oak, and there they sot, seven ducks and two big purple-headed drakes—beauties, I tell you. Well, boys, I upped gun and tuck sight stret away, but just as I was drawin', I kind o' thought I'd got two little charges of number eight, and that to shoot at ducks at fifteen rod wasn't nauthen. Well, then, I fell a thinkin', and then I sairched my pockets, and arter a piece found two green cartridges of number three, as Archer gave me in the Spring, so I drewed out the small shot, and inned with these, and put fresh caps on to be sarten. But jest when I'd got ready, the ducks had floated down with the stream, and dropped behind the pint—so I downed on my knees, and crawled, and Dash along side on me, for all the world as if the darned dog knowed; well, I crawled quite a piece, till I'd got under a bit of alder

bush, and then I seen them—all in a lump like, except two—six ducks and a big drake—feedin', and stickin' down their heads into the weeds, and flutterin' up their hinder ends, and chatterin' and jokin'—I could have covered them all with a handkercher, exceptin' two, as I said afore, one duck and the little drake, and they was off a rod or better from the rest, at 'he two different sides of the stream—the big bunch warn't ver ten rods off me, nor so far; so I tuck sight right at the big drake's neck. The water was quite clear and still, and seemed to have caught all the little light as was left by the sun, for the skies had got pretty dark, I tell you; and I could see his head quite clear agin the water—well, I draw'd trigger, and the hull charge ripped into 'em—and there was a scrabblin' and a squatterin' in the water now, I tell you—but not one on 'em riz—not the darned one of the hull bunch; but up jumped both the others, and I drawed on the drake—more by the whistlin' of his wings, than that I seen him—but I drawed stret, Archer, any ways; and arter I'd pulled half a moment I hard him plump down into the creek with a splash, and the water sparkled up like a fountain where he fell. So then I didn't wait to load, but ran along the bank as hard as I could strick it, and when I'd got down to the spot, I tell you, little Dash had got two on 'em out afore I came, and was in with a third. Well, sich a cuttin' and a splashin' as there was you niver did see, none on you—I guess, for sartin—leastwise I niver did. I'd killed, you see, the drake and two ducks, dead at the first fire, but three was only wounded, wing-tipped, and leg-broken, and I can't tell you what all. It was all of nine o'clock at night, and dark as all out doors, afore I gathered them three ducks, but I did gather 'em; Lord, boys, why I'd stayed till mornin, but I'd a got them, sarten. Well, the drake I killed flyin' I couldn't find him that night, no how, for the stream swept him down, and I hadn't got no guide to go by, so I let *him* go then, but I was up next mornin' bright and airy, and started up the stream clean from the bridge here, up through Garry's backside, and my boghole, and so on along the meadows to Aunt Sally's run—and looked in every willow bush that dammed the waters back, like, and every bunch of weeds, and brier-brake, all the way, and sure enough I found him, he'd been killed dead, and floated down the crick, and then the stream had washed him up into a heap of broken sticks and briers, and when the waters fell, for there had been a little



GREEN AND BLUE WINGED TEAL.—Page 158.

"The Warwick Woodlands."

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freshet, they left him there breast uppermost—and I *was* glad to find him—for I think, Archer, as that shot was the nicest, prettiest, eternal, darndest, long, *good* shot, I iver did make, anyhow; and it was so dark I couldn't see him."

"A *sweet* shot, Tom," responded Forester, "a sweet pretty shot, if there had only been one word of truth in it, which there is not—don't answer me, you old thief—shut up instantly, and get your traps; for *we've* done feeding, and *you've* done lying, for the present, at least I hope so—and now we'll out, and see whether you've poached up all the game in the country."

"Well, it be gettin' late for sartain," answered Tom, "and that'll save your little wax skin for the time; but see, jest see, boy, if I doesn't sarve you out, now, afore sundown!"

"Which way shall we beat, Tom," asked Harry, as he changed his riding boots for heavy shooting shoes and leggins; "which course to-day?"

"Why, Timothy's gittin' out the wagon, and we'll drive up the old road round the ridge, and so strike in by Minthorne's, and take them ridges down, and so across the hill—there's some big stubbles there, and nice thick brush holes along the fence sides, and the boys does tell us there be one or two big be vies—but, cuss them, they *will* lie!—and over back of Gin'ral Bertolf's barns, and so acrost the road, and round the upper eend of the big pond, and down the long swamp into Hell hole, and Tim can meet us with the wagon at five o'clock, under Bill Wisner's white oak—does that suit you?"

"Excellently well, Tom," replied Harry, "I could not have cut a better day's work out myself, if I had tried. Well, all the traps are in, and the dogs, Timothy, is it not so?"

"Ey! ey! Sur," shouted that worthy from without, "all in, this half-hour, and all roight!"

"Light your cigars then, quick, and let us start—hurrah!"

Within two minutes, they were all seated, Fat Tom in the post of honor by Harry's side upon the driving box, the Commodore and Frank, with Timothy, on the back seat, and off they rattled—ten miles an hour without the whip, up hill and down dale all alike, for they had but three miles to go, and that was gone in double quick time.

"What mun Ay do wi' t' horses, Sur?" asked Tim, touching his castor as he spoke.

"Take them home, to be sure," replied Harry, "and meet us

with them under the oak tree, close to Mr. Wisner's house, at five o'clock this evening."

"Nay! nay! Sur!" answered Tim, with a broad grin, eager to see the sport, and hating to be sent so unceremoniously home, "that winna do, I'm thinking—who'll hug t' gam bag, and carry ' bottles, and make t' loonchun ready; that winna do, Sur, iver. If *you* ple-ase, Sur, Ay'll pit oop t' horses i' Measter Minthorne's barn here, and shak' doon a bite o' hay tull 'em, and so gang on wi' you, and carry t' bag whaile four o' t' clock, and then awa back and hitch oop, and draive doon to t' aik tree!"

"I understand, Tim," said his master, laughing; "I understand right well! you want to see the sport."

"Ayse oophaud it!" grinned Timothy, seeing at once that he should gain his point.

"Well! well! I don't care about it; will Minthorne let us put up the beasts in his barn, Tom?"

"*Let us! let us!*" exclaimed the fat man; "by gad I'd like to see Joe Minthorne, or any other of his breed, a tellin' me I should'nt put my cattle where I pleased; jest let me ketch him at it!"

"Very well; have it your own way, Tim, take care of the beasts, and overtake us as quick as you can!" and as he spoke, he let down the bars which parted a fine wheat stubble from the road, and entered the field with the dogs at heel. "We must part company to beat these little woods, must we not, Tom?"

"I guess so—I'll go on with A——; his Grouse and my Dash will work well enough, and you and Frank keep down the valley hereaways; *we'll* beat that little swamp-hole, and then the open woods to the brook side, and so along the meadows to the big bottom; *you* keep the hill-side coverts, and look the little pond-holes well on Minthorne's Ridge, you'll find a cock or two there anyhow; and beat the bushes by the wall; I guess you'll have a bevy jumpin' up; and try, boys, do, to git 'em down the hill into the boggy bottom, for we *can* use them, I tell you!" and so they parted.

Archer and Forester, with Shot and Chase at heel, entered the little thicket indicated, and beat it carefully, but *blank*; although the dogs worked hard, and seemed as if about to make game more than once. They crossed the road, and came into another little wood, thicker and wetter than the first, with several springy pools, although it was almost upon the summit

of the hill. Here Harry took the left or lower hand, bidding Frank keep near the outside at top, and full ten yards ahead of him.

“And mind, if you hear Tom shoot, or cry *mark*,’ jump over into the open field, and be all eyes, for that’s their line of country into the swamp, where we would have them. Hold up, good ogs, hold up!”

And off they went, crashing and rattling through the dry matted briars, crossing each other evenly, and quartering the ground with rare accuracy. Scarcely, however, had they beat ten paces, before Shot flushed a cock as he was in the very act of turning at the end of his beat, having run in on him down wind, without crossing the line of scent. Flip—flip—flap rose the bird, but as the dog had turned, and was now running from him, he perceived no cause for alarm, fluttered a yard or two onward, and alighted. The dog, who had neither scented nor seen the bird, caught the sound of his wing, and stood stiff on the instant, though his stern was waved doubtfully, and though he turned his sagacious knowing phiz over his shoulder, as if to look out for the pinion, the flap of which had arrested his quick ear. The bird had settled ere he turned, but Shot’s eye fell upon his master, as with his finger on the trigger-guard, and thumb on the hammer, he was stepping softly up in a direct line, with eye intently fixed, toward the place where the woodcock had dropped; he knew as well as though he had been blessed with human intellect, that game was in the wind, and remained still and steady. Flip—flap again up jumped the bird.

“Mark cock,” cried Forester, from the other side of the wood, not having seen any thing, but hearing the sound of the timber doodle’s wing somewhere or other; and at the self-same moment bang! boomed the full report of Harry’s right hand barrel, the feathers drifting off down wind toward Frank, told him the work was done, and he asked no question; but ere the cock had struck the ground, which he did within half a second, completely doubled up—whirr, whirr-r-r! the loud and startling hubbub of ruffed grouse taking wing at the report of Harry’s gun, succeeded—and instantly, before that worthy had got his eye about from marking the killed woodcock, bang! bang! from Forester. Archer dropped butt, and loaded as fast as it was possible, and bagged his dead bird quietly, but scarcely had he done so before Frank hailed him.

"Bring up the dogs, old fellow; I knocked down two, and I've bagged one, but I'm afraid the other's run!"

"Stand still, then—stand still, till I join you. He-here, he-here good dogs," cried Harry, striding away through the brush like a good one.

In a moment he stood by Frank, who was just pocketing his first, a fine hen grouse.

"The other was the cock," said Frank, "and a very large one, too; he was a long shot, but he's very hard hit; he flew against this tree before he fell, and bounded off it here; look at the feathers!"

"Ay! we'll have him in a moment; seek dead, Shot; seek, good dogs; ha! now they wind him; *there!* Chase has him—no! he draws again—now Shot is standing; hold up, hold up, lads, he's running like the mischief, and won't stop till he reaches some thick covert."

Bang! bang! "Mark—ma-ark!" bang! bang! "mark, Harry Archer, mark," came down the wind in quick succession from the other party, who were beating some thick briers by the brook side, at three or four fields' distance.

"Quick, Forester, quick!" shouted Archer; "over the wall, lad, and mark them! those are quail; I'm man enough to get this fellow by myself. Steady, lads! steady-y-y!" as they were roading on at the top of their pace. "Toho! toho-o-o, Chase; fie, for shame—don't you see, sir, Shot's got him dead there under his very nose in those cat-briers. Ha! dead! good lads—good lads; dead! dead! fetch him, good dog; by George but he is a fine bird. I've got him, Forester; have you marked down the quail?"

"Ay! ay! in the bog bottom!"

"How many?"

"Twenty-three!"

"Then we'll have sport, by Jove!" and, as he spoke, they entered a wide rushy pasture, across which, at some two or three hundred yards, A—— and fat Tom were seen advancing toward them. They had not made three steps before both dogs stood stiff as stones in the short grass, where there was not a particle of covert.

"Why, what the deuce is this, Harry?"

"Devil a know know I," responded he; "but step up to the red dog, Frank—I'll go to the other—they've got game, and no mistake!"

“Skeap—ske-eap!” up sprang a couple of English snipe before Shot’s nose, and Harry cut them down, a splendid double shot, before they had flown twenty yards, just as Frank dropped the one which rose to him at the same moment. At the sound of the guns a dozen more rose hard by, and fluttering on in rapid zig-zags, dropped once again within a hundred yards—the meadow was alive with them.

“Did you ever see snipe *here* before, Tom?” asked Harry, as he loaded.

“Never in all my life—but it’s full now—load up! load up! for heaven’s sake!”

“No hurry, Tom! Tom—steady! the birds are tame and lie like stones. We can get thirty or forty *here*, I know, if you’ll be steady only—but if we go in with these four dogs, we shall lose all. Here comes Tim with the couples, and we’ll take up all but two!”

“That’s right,” said A——; “take up Grouse and Tom’s dog, for they won’t hunt with yours—and yours are the steadiest, and fetch—that’s it, Tim, couple them, and carry them away. What have you killed, Archer?” he added, while his injunctions were complied with.

“One woodcock and a brace of ruffed grouse! and Frank has marked down three-and-twenty quail into that rushy bottom yonder, where we can get every bird of them. We are going to have great sport to-day!”

“I think so. Tom and I each killed a double shot out of that bevy!”

“That was well! Now, then, walk slowly and far apart—we must beat this three or four times, at least—the dogs will get them up!”

It was not a moment before the first bird rose, but it was quite two hours, and all the dinner horns had long blown for noon, before the last was bagged—the four guns having scored, in that one meadow, forty-nine English snipe—fifteen for Harry Archer—thirteen for Tom Draw—twelve for the Commodore, and only nine for Forester, who never killed snipe quite so well as he did cock or quail.

“And now, boys,” exclaimed Tom, as he flung his huge carcase on the ground, with a thud that shook it many a rod around—“there’s a cold roast fowl, and some nice salt pork and crackers, in that ’ar game bag—and I’m a whale now, I tell you, for a drink!”

"Which will you take to drink, Tom?" inquired Forester, very gravely—"fowl, pork, or crackers? Here they are, all of them! I prefer whiskey and water, myself!" qualifying, as he spoke, a moderate cup with some of the ice-cold water which welled out in a crystal stream from a small basin under the wreathed roots of the sycamore which overshadowed them.

"None of your nonsense, Forester—hand us the liquor, lad—I'm dry, I tell you!"

"I wish you'd tell me something I don't know, then, if you feel communicative; for I know that you're dry—*now* and always! Well! don't be mad, old fellow, here's the bottle—don't empty it—that's all!"

"Well! now I've dranked," said Tom, after a vast potation, "now I've dranked good—we'll have a bite and rest awhile, and smoke a pipe; and then we'll use them quail, and we'll have time to pick up twenty cock in Hell-hole arterwards, and that won't be a slow day's work, I reckon."

THE QUAIL.

"CERTAINLY this is a very lovely country," exclaimed the Commodore suddenly, as he gazed with a quiet eye, puffing his cigar the while, over the beautiful vale, with the clear expanse of Wickham's Pond in the middle foreground, and the wild hoary mountains framing the rich landscape in the distance.

"Truly, you may say that," replied Harry; "I have travelled over a large part of the world, and for its own peculiar style of loveliness, I must say that I never have seen any thing to match with the vale of Warwick. I would give much, very much, to own a few acres, and a snug cottage here, in which I might pass the rest of my days, far aloof from the

Fumum et opes strepitumque Romæ."

"Then, why the h—l don't you own a few acres?" put in ancient Tom; "I'd be right glad to know, and gladder yit to have you up here, Archer,"

"I would indeed, Tom," answered Harry; "I'm not joking at all; but there are never any small places to be bought hereabout; and, as for large ones, your land is so confounded good, that a fellow must be a nabob to think of buying."



AMERICAN QUAIL.—Page 161.

“The Warwick Woodlands.”

"Well, how would Jem Burt's place suit you, Archer?" asked the fat man. "You knows it—jist a mile and a half 'tother side Warwick, by the crick side? I guess it will have to be sold anyhow next April; leastways the old man's dead, and the heirs want the estate settled up like."

"Suit me!" cried Harry, "by George! it's just the thing, if I recollect it rightly. But how much land is there?"

"Twenty acres, I guess—not over twenty-five, no how."

"And the house?"

"Well, that wants fixin' some; and the bridge over the crick's putty bad, too, it will want putty nigh a new one. Why, the house is a story and a half like; and it's jist an entry stret through the middle, and a parlor on one side on't, and a kitchen on the t'other; and a chamber behind both on 'em."

"What can it be bought for, Tom?"

"I guess three thousand dollars; twenty-five hundred, maybe. It will go cheap, I reckon; I don't hear tell o' no one lookin' at it."

"What will it cost me more to *fix* it, think you?"

"Well, you see, Archer, the land's ben most darned badly done by, this last three years, since old 'squire's ben so low; and the bridge, that'll take a smart sum; and the fences is putty much gone to rack; I guess it'll take hard on to a thousand more to fix it up right, like you'd like to have it, without doin' nothin' at the house."

"And fifteen hundred more for that and the stables. I wish to heaven I had known this yesterday; or rather before I came up hither," said Harry.

"Why so?" asked the Commodore.

"Why, as the deuce would have it, I told my broker to invest six thousand, that I have got loose, in a good mortgage, if he could find one, for five years; and I have got no stocks that I can sell out; all that I have but this, is on good bond and mortgage, in Boston, and little enough of it, too."

"Well, if that's all," said Forester, "we can run down tomorrow, and you will be in time to stop him."

"That's true, too," answered Harry, pondering. "Are you sure it can be bought, Tom?"

"I guess so," was the response.

"That means, I suppose, that you're perfectly certain of it. Why the devil can't you speak English?"

"English!" exclaimed Frank; "Good Lord! why don't you

ask him why he can't speak Greek? English! Lord! Lord! Lord! Tom Draw and English!"

"I'll jist tell Archer what he warnts to know, and then see you, my dear little critter, if I doosn't English you some!" replied the old man, waxing wroth. "Well, Archer, to tell heaven's truth, now, I doos *know* it; but it's an *eternal* all-fired shame of me to be tellin' it, bein' as how I knows it in the way of business like. It's got to be selled by *vandoo** in April.

"Then, by Jove! I will buy it," said Harry; "and down I'll go to-morrow. But that need not take you away, boys; you can stay and finish out the week here, and go home in the Ianthe; Tom will send you down to Nyack."

"Sartain," responded Tom; "but now I'm most darned glad I told you that, Archer. I meant to a told you on't afore, but it clean slipped out of my head; but all's right, now. Hark! hark! don't you hear, boys? The quails hasn't all got together yit—better luck! Hush, A——, and you'll hear them callin'—whew-wheet! whew-wheet! whe-whe-whe;" and the old Turk began to call most scientifically; and in ten minutes the birds were answering him from all quarters, through the circular space of Bog-meadow, and through the thorny brake beyond it, and some from a large ragwort field further yet.

"How is this, Frank—did they scatter so much when they dropped?" asked Harry.

"Yes; part of them 'lighted in the little bank on this edge, by the spring, you know; and some, a dozen or so, right in the middle of the bog, by the single hickory; and five or six went into the swamp, and a few over it."

"That's it! that's it! and they've been running to try to get together," said the Commodore.

"But was too skeart to call, till we'd quit shootin'!" said Tom. "But come, boys, let's be stirrin', else they'll git together like; they keeps drawin', drawin', into one place now, ' can hear."

No sooner said than done; we were all on foot in an instant, and ten minutes brought us to the edge of the first thicket; and here was the truth of Harry's precepts tested by practice in a moment; for they had not yet entered the thin bushes, on

* *Vendue*. Why the French word for a public auction has been adopted throughout the Northern and Eastern States, as applied to a Sheriff's sale, deponent saith not.

which now the red leaves hung few and sere, before old Shot threw his nose high into the air, straightened his neck and his stern, and struck out at a high trot; the other setter evidently knowing what he meant, though as yet he had not caught the wind of them. In a moment they both stood steady; and, almost at the same instant, Tom Draw's Dash, and A——'s Grouse came to the point, all on different birds, in a bit of very open ground, covered with wintergreen about knee deep, and interspersed with only a few scattered bushes.

Whir-r-r—up they got all at once! what a jostle—what a hubbub! Bang! bang! crack! bang! crack! bang! Four barrels exploded in an instant, almost simultaneously; and two sharp unmeaning cracks announced that, by some means or other, Frank Forester's gun had missed fire with both barrels.

"What the deuce is the matter, boys!" cried Harry, laughing, as he threw up his gun, after the hubbub had subsided, and dropped two birds—the only two that fell, for all that waste of shot and powder.

"What the deuce ails you?" he repeated, no one replying, and all hands looking bashful and crest-fallen. "Are you all drunk? or what is the matter? I ask merely for information."

"Upon my life! I believe *I am!*" said Frank Forester. "For I have not loaded my gun at all, since I killed those two last snipe. And, when we got up from luncheon, I put on the caps just as if all was right—but all is right now," he added, for he had repaired his fault, and loaded, before A—— or fat Tom had done staring, each in the other's face, in blank astonishment.

"Step up to Grouse, then," said Archer, who had never taken his eye off the old brown pointer, while he was loading as fast as he could. "He has got a bird, close under his nose; and it will get up, and steal away directly. That's a trick they will play very often."

"He haint got no bird," said Tom, sulkily. And Frank paused doubtful.

"Step up, I tell you, Frank," said Harry, "the old Turk's savage; that's all."

And Frank did step up, close to the dog's nose; and sent his foot through the grass close under it. Still the dog stood perfectly stiff; but no bird rose.

"I telled you there warn't no quails there;" growled Tom.

"And I tell you there are!" answered Archer, more sharply

than he often spoke to his old ally ; for, in truth, he was annoyed at his obstinate pertinacity.

“What do you say, Commodore? Is Grouse lying? Kick that tussock—kick it hard, Frank.”

“Not he,” replied A——; “I’ll bet fifty to one, there’s a bird there.”

“It’s devilish odd, then, that he won’t get up!” said Frank.

Whack! whack! and he gave the hard tussock two kicks with his heavy boot, that fairly made it shake. Nothing stirred. Grouse still kept his point, but seemed half inclined to dash in. Whack! a third kick that absolutely loosened the tough hassock from the ground, and then, whirr-r, from within six inches of the spot where all three blows had been delivered, up got the bird, in a desperate hurry; and in quite as desperate a hurry Forester covered it—covered it before it was six yards off! His finger was on the trigger, when Harry quietly said, “Steady, Frank!” and the word acted like magic.

He took the gun quite down from his shoulder, nodded to his friend, brought it up again, and turned the bird over very handsomely, at twenty yards, or a little further.

“Beautifully done, indeed, Frank,” said Harry. “So much for coolness!”

“What do you say to that, Tom?” said the Commodore, laughing.

But there was no laugh in Tom; he only muttered a savage growl, and an awful imprecation; and Harry’s quick glance warned A—— not to plague the old Trojan further.

All this passed in a moment; and then was seen one of those singular things that will at times happen; but with regard to quail only, so far as I have ever seen or heard tell. For as Forester was putting down the card upon the powder in the barrel which he had just fired, a second bird rose, almost from the identical spot whence the first had been so difficultly flushed, and went off in the same direction. But not in the least was Frank flurried now. He dropped his ramrod quietly upon the grass, brought up his piece deliberately to his eye, and killed his bird again.

“Excellent—excellent! Frank,” said Harry again. “I never saw two prettier shots in all my life. Nor did I ever see birds lie harder.”

During all this time, amidst all the kicking of tussocks, threshing of bog-grass, and banging of guns, and, worst of all,

bouncing up of fresh birds, from the instant when they dropped at the first shot, neither one of Harry's dogs, nor Tom's little Dash, had budged from their down charge. Now, however, they got up quickly, and soon retrieved all the dead birds.

"Now, then, we will divide into two parties," said Harry. "Frank, you go with Tom; and you come with me, Commodore. It will never do to have you two jealous fellows together, you wont kill a bird all day," he added, in a lower voice. "That is the worst of old Tom, when he gets jealous he's the very devil. Frank is the only fellow that can get along with him at all. He puts *me* out of temper, and if we both got angry, it would be very disagreeable. For, though he is the very best fellow in the world, when he is in a rage he is untameable. I cannot think what has put him out, now; for he has shot very well to-day. It is only when he gets behindhand, that he is usually jealous in his shooting; but he has got the deuce into him now."

By this time the two parties were perhaps forty yards apart, when Dash came to a point again. Up got a single bird, the old cock, and flew directly away from Tom, across Frank's face; but not for that did the old chap pause. Up went his cannon to his shoulder, there was a flash and a roar, and the quail, which was literally not twelve feet from him, disappeared as if it had been resolved into thin air. The whole of Tom's concentrated charge had struck the bird endwise, as it flew from him; and, except the extreme tips of his wings and one foot, no part of him could be found.

"The devil!" cried Harry, "that is too bad!"

"Never mind," said the Commodore, "Frank will manage him."

As he spoke a second bird got up, and crossed Forester in the same manner, Draw doing precisely as he had done before; but, this time, missing the quail clear, which Forester turned over.

"Load quick! and step up to that fellow. He will run, think!" said Archer.

"Ay! ay!" responded Frank, and, having rammed down his charge like lightning, moved forward, before he had put the cap on the barrel he had fired.

Just as he took the cap out of his pocket between his finger and thumb, a second quail rose. As cool and self-possessed as is possible to conceive, Frank cocked the left hand barrel with

his little finger, still holding the cap between his forefinger and thumb, and actually contrived to bring up the gun, some how or other,* and to kill the bird, pulling the trigger with his middle finger.

At the report a third quail sprang, close under his feet; and, still unshaken, he capped the right hand barrel, fired, and the bird towered!

"Mark! mark! Tom—ma-ark Timothy!" shouted Harry and A—— in a breath.

"That bird is as dead as Hannibal now!" added Archer, as, having spun up three hundred feet into the air, and flown twice as many hundred yards, it turned over, and fell plumb, like a stone, through the clear atmosphere.

"Ayse gotten that chap marked doon roight, ayse warrant un!" shouted Timothy from the hill side, where with some trouble, he was holding in the obstreperous spaniels. "He's doon in a roight laine atwixt 't muckle gray stean and yon hoigh ashen tree."

"Did you ever see such admirable shooting, though?" asked A——, in a low voice. "I did not know Forester shot like that."

"Sometimes he does. When he's cool. He is not certain; that is his only fault. One day he is the coolest man I ever saw in a field, and the next the most impetuous; but when he is cool, he shoots splendidly. As you say, A——, I never saw anything better done in my life. It was the perfection of coolness and quickness combined."

"I cannot conceive how it *was* done at all. How he brought up and fired that first barrel with a cap between his thumb and forefinger! Why, I could not fire a gun so, in cold blood!"

"Nor could he, probably. Deliberate promptitude is the thing! Well, Tom, what do you think of that? Wasn't that pretty shooting?"

"It was so, pretty shootin'," responded the fat man, quite delighted out of his crusty mood. "I guess the darned little ritter's got three barrels to his gun somehow; leastwise it seems to me, I swon, 'at he fired her off three times without loadin'! I guess I'll qui. tryin' to shoot agin Frank, to-day."

"I told you so!" said Harry to the Commodore, with a low

* If I had not seen the whole of this scene with my eyes, and had I not witnesses of the fact, I would scarce dare to relate it. From the cutting the first bird to atoms, all is strictly true.

laugh, and then added aloud—"I think you may as well, Tom—for I don't believe the fellow will miss another bird to-day."

And in truth, strange to say, it fell out, in reality, nearly as Archer had spoken in jest. The whole party shot exceedingly well. The four birds, which Tom and the Commodore had missed at the first start, were found again in an old ragwort field, and brought to bay; and of the twenty-three quail which Forester had marked down into the bog meadow, not one bird escaped, and of that bevy not one bird did Frank miss, killing twelve, all of them double shots, to his own share, and beating Archer in a canter.

But that sterling sportsman cared not a stiver; too many times by far had he had the field, too sure was he of doing the same many a time again, to dislike being beaten once. Besides this, he was always the least jealous shot in the world, for a very quick one; and, in this instance, he was perhaps better pleased to see his friend "go in and win," than he would have been to do the like himself.

Exactly at two o'clock, by A——'s repeater, the last bird was bagged; making twenty-seven quail, forty-nine snipe, two ruffed grouse, and one woodcock, bagged in about five hours.

"So far, this is the very best day's sport I ever saw," said Archer; "and two things I have seen which I never saw before; a whole bevy of quail killed without the escape of one bird, and a whole bevy killed entirely by double shots, except the odd bird. You, A——, have killed three double shots—I have killed three—Tom Draw one double shot, and the odd bird; and Master Frank there, confound him, six double shots running—the cleverest thing I ever heard of, and, in Forester's case, the best shooting possible. I have missed one bird, you two, and Tom three."

"But Tom beant a goin' to miss no more birds, I can tell you, boy. Tom's drinked agin, and feels kind o' righter than he did—kind o' *first best!* You'd best all drink, boys—the spring's handy, close by here; and after we gits down acrost the road into the big swamp, and Hell-Hole, there arn't a drop o' water fit to drink, till we gits way down to Aunt Sally's big spring-hole, jest to home."

"I second the motion," said Harry; "and then let us be quick, for the day is wearing away, and we have got a long beat yet before us. I wish it were a sure one. But it is not. Once in three or four years we get a grand day's sport in the

big swamp; but for one good day we have ten bad ones. However, we are sure to find a dozen birds or so in Hell-Hole; and a bevy of quail in the Captain's swamp, shan't we, Tom?"

"Yes, if we gits so far; but somehow or other I rather guess we'll find quite a smart chance o' cock. Captain Reed was down there a' Satterday, and he saw heaps on 'em."

"That's no sure sign. They move very quickly now. Here to-day and there to-morrow," said Archer. "In the large woods especially. In the small places there are plenty of sure finds."

"There harn't been nothing of frosts yet keen enough to stir them," said Tom. "I guess we'll find them. And there harn't been a gun shot off this three weeks there. Hoel's wife's ben down sick all the fall, and Halbert's gun busted in the critter's hand."

"Ah! did it hurt him?"

"Hurt him some—skeart him considerable, though. I guess he's quit shootin' pretty much. But come—here we be, boys. I'll keep along the outside, where the walkin's good. You git next me, and Archer next with the dogs, and A—— inside of all. Keep right close to the cedars, A——; all the birds 'at you flushes will come stret out this aways. They never flies into the cedar swamp. Archer, how does the ground look?"

"I never saw it look so well, Tom. There is not near so much water as usual, and yet the bottom is all quite moist and soft."

"Then we'll get cock for sartain."

"By George!" cried A——, "the ground is like a honey-comb, with their borings; and as white in places with their droppings, as if there had been a snow fall!"

"Are they fresh droppings, A——?"

"Mark! Ah! Grouse! Grouse! for shame. There he is down. Do you see him, Harry?"

"Ay! ay! Did Grouse flush him?"

"Deliberately, at fifty yards off. I must lick him."

"Pray do; and that mercifully."

"And that soundly," suggested Frank, as an improvement.

"Soundly is mercifully," said Harry, "because one good flogging settles the business; whereas twenty slight ones only harass a dog, and do nothing in the way of correction or prevention."

"True, oh king!" said Frank, laughing. "Now let us go

on; for, as the bellowing of that brute is over, I suppose 'chastisement has hidden her head.'"

And on they did go; and sweet shooting they had of it; all the way down to the thick deep spot, known by the pleasing sobriquet of Hell-Hole.

The birds were scattered everywhere throughout the swamp, so excellent was the condition of the ground; scattered so much, that, in no instance did two rise at once; but one kept flapping up after another, large and lazy, at every few paces; and the sportsmen scored them fast, although scarcely aware how fast they were killing them. At length, when they reached the old creek-side, and the deep black mud-holes, and the tangled vines and leafy alders, there was, as usual, a quick, sharp, and decisive rally. Before the dogs were thrown into it, Frank was sent forward to the extreme point, and the Commodore out into the open field, on the opposite side from that occupied by fat Tom.

On the signal of a whistle, from each of the party, Harry drove into the brake with the spaniels, the setters being now consigned to the care of Timothy; and in a moment, his loud "Hie cock! Hie cock! Pur-r-r—Hie cock! good dogs!" was succeeded by the shrill yelping of the cockers, the flap of the fast rising birds, and the continuous rattling of shots.

In twenty minutes the work was done; and it was well that it was done; for, within a quarter of an hour afterwards, it was too dark to shoot at all.

In that last twenty minutes twenty-two cock were actually brought to bag, by the eight barrels; twenty-eight had been picked up, one by one, as they came down the long swamp, and one Harry had killed in the morning. When Timothy met them, with the horses, at the big oak tree, half an hour afterward—for he had gone off across the fields, as hard as he could foot it to the farm, as soon as he had received the setters—it was quite dark; and the friends had counted their game out regularly, and hung it up *secundum artem* in the loops of the new game bag.

It was a huge day's sport—a day's sport to talk about for years afterward—Tom Draw does talk about it now!

Fifty-one woodcock, forty-nine English snipe, twenty-seven quail, and a brace of ruffed grouse. A hundred and twenty-nine head in all, on unreserved ground, and in very wild

walking. It is to be feared it will never be done any more in the vale of Warwick. For this, alas! was ten years ago.

When they reached Tom's it was decided that they should all return home on the morrow; that Harry should attend to the procuring his purchase money; and Tom to the cheapening of the purchase.

In addition to this, the old boy swore, by all his patron saints, 'hat he would come down in spring, and have a touch at the nipe he had heerd Archer tell on at Pine Brook.

A capital supper followed; and of course lots of good liquor, and the toast, to which the last cup was quaffed, was
LONG LIFE TO HARRY ARCHER, AND LUCK TO HIS SHOOTING BOX,
to which Frank Forester added

“I wish he may get it.”

And so that party ended; all of its members hoping to enjoy many more like it, and that very speedily.

TOM DRAW'S VISIT TO PINE BROOK.

THE SPORTSMAN'S SPREAD.

THE long cold winter had passed away and been succeeded by the usual alternations of damp sloppy thaws, and piercing eastern gales, which constitute a North American Spring; and now the croaking of the bull-frogs, heard from every pool and puddle, the bursting buds of the young willows, and, above all, the appearance of Shad in market, announced to the experienced sportsman, the arrival of the English Snipe upon the marshes. For some days Harry Archer had been busily employed in overhauling his shooting apparatus, exercising his setters, watching every change of wind, and threatening a speedy expedition into the meadows of New Jersey, so soon as three days of easterly rain should be followed by mild weather from the southward. Anxiously looked for, and long desired, at last the eastern storm set in, cold, chilling, misty, with showers of smoky driving rain, and Harry for two entire days had rubbed his hands in ecstasy; while Timothy stood ever in the stable door—his fists plunged deep in the recesses of his breeches' pockets, and a queer smile illuminating the honest ugliness of his bluff visage—patiently watching for a break in the dull clouds—his harness hanging the while in readiness for instant use, with every crest and turret as bright as burnished gold; his wagon all prepared, with bear-skins and top-coats displayed; and his own kit packed up in prompt anticipation of the first auspicious moment. The third dark morning had dawned dingily; the rain still drifted noiselessly against the windows, while gutters overflowed, and kennels swollen into torrents announced its volume and duration. There was not then the least temptation to stir out of doors, and, sulky myself, I was employed in coaxing a sulky cigar beside a yet more sulky fire, with an empty coffee-cup and a large quarto volume of Froissart upon the table at my elbow, when a quick cheery triple rap at the street

door announced a visitor, and was succeeded instantly by a firm rapid footstep on the stairs, accompanied by the multitudinous pattering and whimpering of spaniels. Without the ceremony of a knock the door flew open; and in marched, with his hat on one side, a dirty looking letter in his hand, and Messrs. Dan and Flash at his heel, the renowned Harry Archer.

"Here's a lark, Frank," exclaimed that worthy, pitching the billet down upon the table, and casting himself into an arm-chair: "Old Tom is to be here to-day to dinner, and wants to go with us to the snipe meadow. So we will dine, if it so please you, at my house at three—I have invited Mac to join us—and start directly after for Pine Brook."

"The devil!" I responded, somewhat energetically; "what, in this rain?"

"Rain—yes, indeed. The wind has hauled already to the westward of the south, and we shall have a starlight night, and a clear day to-morrow, and grand sport, I'll warrant you! Rain—yes! I'm glad it *does* rain; it will keep cockney *gunners* off the meadows."

"But will Tom really be here? How do you know it? Have you seen him?"

"Read—read, man!" he responded, lighting the while a dark cheroot, and lugging out my gun-case to inspect its traps. And I in due obedience took up the billet-doux, which had produced this notable combustion. It was a thin, dirty, oblong letter, written *across the lines* upon ruled paper, with a pencil, wafered, and stamped with a key, and bearing in round school-boy characters the following direction:—

for Mr. Harrye Archere Newe Yorke Esqre
69 Merceye streete.

Internally it ran—

Olde friends

havin to git some grocerees down to Yorke, I reckons to quit nere on Satterdaye, and so be i can fix it counts to see you tewsdaye for sartain. quaille promises to be considerable plentye, and cocke has come on most ongodly thicke, i was down to Sam Blainses one night a fortnite since and heerd a heape on them a drumminge and chatteringe everywheres round aboute. if snipes is come on yit i reckon i could git away a daye or soe down into Jarsey ways—no more at preasente from
ever youre old friende

Thomas Drawe

i shall look in at Merceye streete bout three oclocke dinner time i guesse.

"Well! that matter seems to be settled," answered I, when I had finished the perusal of this most notable epistle. "I suppose he will be here to the fore!"

"Sartain!" responded Archer, grinning; "and do you for once, if possible—which I suppose it is not—be in time for dinner; I will not wait five minutes, and I shall give you a good feed; pack up your traps, and Tim shall call for them at two. We dine at *three*, mind! Start from my door at half-past five, so as to get across in the six o'clock boat. Hard will be looking out for us, I know, about this time, at Pine Brook; and we shall do it easy in *three* hours, for the roads will be heavy. Come along, dogs. Good bye, Frank. Three o'clock! now don't be late, there's a good lad. Here Flash! here Dan!" and gathering his Macintosh about him, exit Harry.

Thereupon to work I went with a will; rummaged up gun, cleaning-rod, copper-caps, powder-horns, shot-pouch, and all the et ceteras of shooting, which—being always stowed away with so much care at the end of one season, that they are undiscoverable at the beginning of the next—are sources of eternal discomfiture to those most all-accomplished geniuses, high sportsmen's servants: got out and greased my fen boots with the fit admixture of tallow, tar, beeswax, and Venice turpentine; hunted up shooting jacket, corduroys, plaid waistcoat, and check shirts; and, in fact, perpetrated the detested task of packing, barely in time for Timothy, who, as he shouldered *my* portmanteau, and hitched up the waistband of *his own* most voluminous unmentionables, made out in the midst of grins and nods, and winks, to deliver himself to the following effect—

"Please sur, measter says, if you ple-ase to moind three o'clock—for he'll be dommed, he said, please Measter Forester, av he waits haaf a minit—"

"Very well, Tim, very well—that'll do—I'll be ready."

"And Measter Draw be coom'd tew—nay but Ay do think 'at he's fatter noo than iver—ecod, Ayse laff to see him doon i' t' mossy meadows laike—he'll swear, Ayse warrant him."

And with a burst of merriment, that no one pair of mortals save Timothy's alone could ever have accomplished, he withdrew, leaving me to complete my toilet; in which, believe me, gentle reader, mindful of a good feed and of short law, I made no needless tarrying.

The last stroke of the hour appointed had not yet stricken when I was on the steps of Harry's well-known snug two-storied

domicile ; in half a minute more I was at my ease in his study, where, to my no small wonder, I found myself alone, with no other employment than to survey, for the nine hundredth time, the adornments of that exquisite model for that most snug of all things, a cozy bachelor's peculiar snuggerly. It was a small back room, with two large windows looking out upon a neatly trimmed grass-plot bordered with lilacs and laburnums ; its area, of sixteen feet by fourteen, was strewn with a rich Turkey carpet, and covered with every appurtenance for luxury and comfort that could be brought into its limits without encumbering its brief dimensions. A bright steel grate, with a brilliant fire of Cannel coal, occupied the centre of the south side, facing the entrance, while a superb book-case and secretaire of exquisite mahogany filled the recess on either hand of it, their glass doors showing an assortment, handsomely bound, of some eight hundred volumes, classics, and history, and the gems of modern poesy and old romance. Above the mantel-piece, where should have hung the mirror, was a wide case, covering the whole front of the pier, with doors of plate glass, through which might be discovered, supported on a rack of ebony, and set off by a background of rich crimson velvet, the select armory, prized above all his earthly goods by their enthusiastic owner—consisting of a choice pair of twin London-made double-barrels, a short splendidly finished once-ball rifle, a heavy single pigeon gun, a pair of genuine Kuchenreuter's nine-inch duelling pistols, and a smaller pair by Joe Manton, for the belt or pocket—all in the most perfect order, and ready for immediate use. Facing this case upon the opposite wall, along the whole length of which ran a divan, or wide low sofa, of crimson damask, hung two oil paintings, originals by Edward Landseer, of dogs—hounds, terriers, and all, in fact, of canine race, mongrels of low degree alone excepted—under these were suspended, upon brackets, two long duck guns, and an array of tandem and four-horse whips, besides two fly-rods, and a cherry-stick Persian pipe, ten feet at least in length. The space between the windows was occupied by two fine *ex* gravings, one of the Duke of Wellington, the other of Sir Walter in his study—Harry's political and literary idols ; a library centre table, with an inkstand of costly *buhl*, covered with *perç* dicals and papers, and no less than four sumptuous arm-chairs of divers forms and patterns, completed the appointments of the room ; but the picture still would be incomplete, were I to pass over a huge tortoise-shell Tom Cat,

which dozed upon the rug in amicable vicinity to our old friends the spaniels Dan and Flash. It did not occupy me quite so long to take a survey of these well-remembered articles, as it has done to describe them; nor, in fact, had that been the case, should I have found the time to reconnoitre them; for scarcely was I seated by the fire, before the ponderous trampling of Old Tom might be heard on the stair-case, as in vociferous converse with our host he came down from the chamber, wherein, by some strange process of persuasion assuredly peculiar to himself, Harry had forced him to go through the ceremony of ablution, previous to his attack upon the viands, which were in truth not likely to be dealt with more mercifully in consequence of this delay. Another moment, and they entered—"Arcades ambo" duly rigged for the occasion—Harry in his neat claret-colored jockey-coat, white waistcoat, corduroys and gaiters—Tom in Canary-colored vest, sky-blue dress coat with huge brass buttons, gray kerseymere unmentionables, with his hair positively brushed, and his broad jolly face clean shaved, and wonderfully redolent of soap and water. The good old soul's face beamed with unfeigned delight, and grasping me affectionately by the hand—

"How be you?" he exclaimed—"How be you, Forester—you looks well, anyways."

"Why, I am well, Tom," responded I, "but I shall be better after I've had that drink that Archer's getting ready—you're dry, I fancy—"

"Sartain!" was the expected answer; and in a moment the pale Amontillado sherry and the bitters were paraded—but no such darned washy stuff, as he termed it, would the old Trojan look at, much less taste; and Harry was compelled to produce the liquor stand, well stored with potent waters, when at the nick of time McTavish entered in full fig for a regular slap-up party, not knowing at all whom he had been asked to meet. Not the least discomposed, however, that capital fellow was instantly at home, and as usual, up to every sort of fun.

"What, Draw," said he, "who the devil thought of seeing you here—when did you come down? Oh! the dew, certainly," he continued, in reply to Archer, who was pressing a drink on him—"the mountain dew for me—catch a Highlander at any other dram, when *Whasky's* to the fore—ay, Tom?"

"Catch you at any dram, exceptin' that what's strongest. See to him now!" as Mac tossed off his modicum, and smacked his lips approvingly: "see to him now! I'd jist as lief drink down

so much fire, and *he* pours it in—pours it in, jist like as one it was mother's milk to the darned critter."

"Ple-ase Sur, t' dinner's re-ady," announced Timothy, throwing open the folding doors, and displaying the front room, with a beautiful fire blazing, and a good old fashioned round table, covered with exquisite white damask-linen, and laid with four covers, each flanked by a most unusual display of glasses—a mighty bell-mouthed rummer, namely, on a tall slender stock with a white spiral line running up through the centre, an apt substitute for that most awkward of all contrivances, the ordinary champagne glass—a beautiful green hock goblet, with a wreath of grapes and vine leaves wrought in relief about the rim—a massy water tumber elaborately diamond-cut—and a capacious sherry-glass so delicate and thin that the slender crystal actually seemed to bend under the pressure of your lip; nor, were the liquors wanting in proportion—two silver wine-coolers, all frosted over with the exudations from the ice within, displayed the long necks of a champagne flask and a bottle of Johannisbergher, and four decanters hung out their labels of Port, Madeira, brown Sherry, and Amontillado—while two or three black, copper-wired bottles, in the chimney-corner, announced a stock of heavy-wet, for such as should incline to malt. I had expected from Tom's lips some preternatural burst of wonder, at this display of preparation, the like of which, as I conceived, had never met his eyes before—but, whether he had been indoctrinated by previous feeds at Harry's hospitable board, or had learned by his own native wit the difficult lesson of *nil admirari*, he sat down without any comment, though he stared a little wildly, when he saw nothing eatable upon the table, except a large dish of raw oysters, flanked by a lemon and a cruet of cayenne. With most ineffable disdain, he waved off the plate which Tim presented to him, with a "Consarn you, I arnt a goin to give my belly cold with no such chillin' stuff as that. I'd like to know now, Archer, if this bees all that you're a goin' to give us—for if so be it is, I'll go stret down to the nigger's yonder, and git me a beef steak and onions?"

"Why, not exactly, Tom," responded Archer, when he could speak for laughing—"these are merely for a whet to give us an appetite."

"A blamed queer sort of *wet*, I think—why I'd have thought that ere rum, what McTavish took, would have been wet enough, till what time as you got at the champagne—and, as for appe-

tite, I reckon now a man whose guts is always cravin—cravin—like yours be, had better a taken somethin' *dry* to keep it down like, than a *wet* to moisten it up more."

By this time the natives, which had so moved Tom's indignation, were succeeded by a tureen of superb mutton broth, to which the old man did devote himself most assiduously, while Mac was loud in approbation of the brouse, saying it only wanted bannocks to be perfection.

"Cuss you, you're niver satisfied, *you aint*," Tom had commenced, when he was cut short by "The Sherry round—Tim"—from our host—"you'd better take the brown, Tom, it's the strongest!" The old man thrust his rummer forth, as being infinitely the biggest, and—Timothy persisting in pouring out the strong and fruity sherry into the proper glass—burst out again indignantly—

"I'd be pleased to know, Archer, now, why you puts big glasses on the table, if you don't mean they should be dranked out of—to tantalize a chap, I reckon"—down went the wine at one gulp, and the exquisite aroma conquered—he licked his lips, sighed audibly, smiled, grinned, then laughed aloud. "I see—I see," he said at last; "you reckon it's too prime to be dranked out of big ones—and I dun' know but what you're right too—but what on airthe is we to drink out of these—not *water*, that I know! leastways, I niver see none in this house, no how."

"The green one is for brandy, Tom!" McTavish answered.

"Ey, ey!" Tom interrupted him, "and they makes them *green*, I guess, so as no one shall see how much a body takes—now that's what I does call *genteel*!"

"And this large plain one," added Mac, looking as grave as a judge, and lifting one of the huge champagne glasses—"is a dram glass for drinking Scotch whiskey—what they call in the Highlands a thimblefull—"

"They take it as a medicine there, you see, Tom," continued Archer; "a preventive to a disease well known in those parts, called the Scotch fiddle—did you ever hear of it?"

"Carnt say," responded Tom; "what like is't?"

"Oh, Mac will tell you, he suffers from it sadly—didn't you see him tuck in the specific—it was in compliment to him I had the *thimbles* set out to-day."

"Oh! that's it, ay?" the fat man answered. "Well, I don't care if I do"—in answer to Harry's inquiry whether he would take some boiled shad, which, with caper sauce, had replaced

the soup—"I don't care if I do—shads isn't got to Newburgh—yet, leastways I harnt seen none—"

Well might he say that, by the way, for they had scarce appeared in New York, and were attainable now only at the moderate rate of something near their weight in silver. After the fish, a dram of Ferintosh was circulated in one small glass, exquisitely carved into the semblance of a thistle, which Draw disposed of with no comment save a passing wonder that when men could get applejack, they should be willing to take up with such smoky trash as that.

A saddle of roast mutton, which had been hanging, Harry said, six weeks, a present from that excellent good fellow, the Captain of the Swallow, followed, and with it came the split-corks—"By heavens," I cried, almost involuntarily—"what a superb champagne"—suffering, after the interjection, something exceeding half a pint of that delicious, dry, high-flavored, and rich-bodied nectar, to glide down my gullet.

"Yes"—answered Harry—"yes—alack! that it should be the last! This is the last but one of the first importation of the Crown—no such wine ever came before into this country, no such has followed it. We shall discuss the brace to-day—what better opportunity? Here is McTavish, its originator, the best judge in the land! Frank Forester, who has sipped of the like at Crockie's, and a place or two beside, which we could mention—myself, who am not slow at any decent tippie, and Thomas Draw, who knows it, I suppose, from *Jarsey Cider!*"

"Yes, and I knows it from the *Jarsey champagne* tew—which you stick into poor chaps, what you fancies doosn't know no better—give me some more of that ere mutton and some jelly—you are most darned sparin' of your jelly now—and Timothy, you snoopin rascal, fill this ere thimbleful agin with that Creawn wine!"

Wild fowl succeeded, cooked to a turn, hot claret duly qualified with cayenne in a sauce-boat by their side—washed down by the last flask of Mac's champagne, of which the last round we quaffed *sorrowfully*, as in duty bound, to the importer's health, and to the memory of the crowned head departed—the *only* crown, as Harry in his funeral oration, truly and pithily observed, which gives the lie to the assertion that "*uneasy* lies the head that wears a crown."

No womanish display of pastry marred the unity of this most solemn masculine repast, a Stilton cheese, a red herring, with

Goshen butter, pilot bread, and porter, concluded the rare banquet. A plate of devilled biscuit, and a magnum of Latour, furnished forth the dessert, which we discussed right jovially; while Timothy, after removing Harry's guns from their post of honor above the mantel-piece to their appropriate cases, stole away to the stable to prepare his cattle.

"Now, boys," said Harry, "make the most of your time. There is the claret, the best in my opinion going—for I have always prized Mac's black-sealed Latour far above Lynch's Margaux—yes, even above that of '25. For Lynch's wine, though exquisitely delicate, was perilous thin; I never tasted it without assenting to Serjeant Bothwell's objection, 'Claret's ower cauld for my stamach,' and desiring like him to qualify it 'wi' a tass of *eau di vie*.' Now this wine has no such fault, it has a body—"

"I don't know, Archer," interrupted Tom, "what that ere sarjeant meant with his darned *o di vee*, but I know now that I'd a cussed sight rayther have a drink o' brandy, or the least mite of applejack, than a whole keg of this red rot-gut!"

"You've hit the nail on the head, Tom," answered I, while Harry, knowing the old man's propensities, marched off in search of the liquor-stand—"It *was* brandy that the serjeant meant!"

"Then why the thunder didn't he say brandy, like a man—instead of coming out with his snivelling *o di vee*?"

"Why, Tom," said I, in explanation, "he admired your favorite drink so much, that he used the French name as most complimentary; it means *water of life*!"

"What, he *watered* it too, did he? I thought he must be a darned poor drinkin' man, to call things out of their right names—precious little of the raal stuff had he ever dranked, I reckon, watered or not—*o di vee*! Cuss all such Latin trash, says I. But here 't comes. Take a drop, doo, McTavish, it's better fifty times, and healthier tew, than that eternal darned sour old vinegar, take a drop, *doo*!"

"Thank you, *no*," answered McTavish, well contented with his present beverage, and after a pause went on addressing Archer—"I wish to heaven you'd let me know what you were up to—I'd have gone along."

"What hinders you from going now?" said Harry. "I can rig you out for the drive, and we can stop at the Carlton, and

get your gun, and the rest of your traps. I wish to the Lord you would!"

"Oh! oh!" Tom burst out, on the instant, "oh! oh! I won't go, sartain, less so be McTavish concludes on going tew—we can't do nothing without him."

It was in vain, however, that we all united in entreating him to go along—he had business to do to-morrow—he was afraid of getting his feet wet, and fifty other equally valid excuses, till Harry exclaimed—"It's no use, I can tell you Donald's bluid's up, and there's an end of it—"

Whereat McTavish laughed, and saying that he did not think, for a very short-sighted man, snipe-shooting up to his waist in water, and up to his knees in mud, *was* the great thing it is cracked up to be, filled himself a pretty sufficient dose of hot toddy, and drank to our good luck. Just at this moment, up rattled, ready packed, with the dogs in, the gun-cases stowed, and store of topcoats, capes, and bear-skins, all displayed, the wagon to the door.

"I need not tell you, Mac," cried Archer, as he wrung the gallant Celt by the hand, "to make yourself at home—we must be off, you know;"—then opening the window, "hand in those coats, Timothy, out of that drizzling rain—I thought you had more sense."

"Nay, then, they're no but just coom fra under t' aprons," responded Tim, not over and above delighted at the reflection on his genius—"they're droy as booans, Ayse warrant um."

"Well! hand them in then—hand them in—where's *your* coat, Tom?—that's it; now look here, buckle on this crape of mine over your shoulders, and take this India-rubber hood, and tie it over your hat, and you may laugh at *four-and-twenty-hours'* rain, let alone two. You have got toggery enough, Frank, I conclude—so here goes for myself." Whereupon he indued, first a pea-jacket of extra pilot-cloth, and a pair of English mud-boots, buttoning to the mid-thigh; and, above these, a regular box coat of stout blue dreadnought, with half a dozen capes; an oil-skin covered hat, with a curtain to protect his neck and ears, fastening with a hook and eye under the chin, completing his attire. In we got, thereupon, without more ado. Myself and Timothy, with the two setters, in the box-seat behind, the leathern apron unrolled and buttoned up, over a brace of buffalo robes, hairy side inward, to our middles—Harry and Tom in front, with one superb black bearskin

drawn up by a ring and strap to the centre of the back rail between them, and the patent water-proof apron hooked up to either end of the seat—the effeminacy of umbrellas we despised—our cigars lighted, and our bodies duly muffled up, off we went, at a single chirrup of our driver, whose holly four-horse whip stood in the socket by his side unheeded, as with his hands ungloved, and his beautiful, firm, upright seat upon the box, he wheeled off at a gentle trot, the good nags *knowing* their master's hand and voice, as well as if they had been his children, and *obeying* them far better.

Our drive, it must be admitted, through the heavy rain was nothing to brag of. Luckily, however, before we had got over much more than half our journey, the storm gradually ceased, as the night fell; and, by the time we reached the big swamp, it was clear all over the firmament; with a dark, dark blue sky, and millions of stars twinkling gayly—and the wind blowing freshly but pleasantly out of the nor-norwest!

“Did I not tell you so, boys?” exclaimed Archer, joyously pointing with his whip to the bright skies—“we'll have a glorious day to-morrow.” Just as he spoke, we reached the little toll-gate by the Morris Canal; and, as we paused to change a fifty cent piece, what should we hear, high in air, rapidly passing over our heads, but the well-known “*skeap! skeap!*” the thin shrill squeak of unnumbered snipe, busy in their nocturnal voyage; and within an hour thereafter we arrived at our journey's end, where a glass all round of tip-top champagne brandy—a neat snug supper of capital veal cutlets, ham and eggs, and pork steaks and sausages, finished the day, and tired enough, we went to bed early and dreamed.

THE SNIPE.

“WHAT sort of a morning is it, Timothy?” asked I, rubbing my eyes, as I sat bolt upright in bed on the irruption of that *fidus Achates*, some half hour before sunrise, into my little dormitory; “What sort of a morning is it?”

“A varry bonny mornin, Measter Frank,” responded he; “there was a leetle tooch o' whaite frost aboot midnight, but sin' t' moon set, there's been a soop o' warm ra-ain, and it's

dooll noo, and saft loike, wi' t' wind sootherly—but it's boon to be nooght at all, Ayse warrant it. T' Soon'll be oot enoo—see if he beant—and t' snaipe 'll laie laike steans. Ayse awa noo, and fetch t' het watter—t' veal cootlets is i' t' pann, and John Van Dyne he's been a wa-aiting iver sin 't got laight."

"That's not very long, then," answered I, springing out of bed, "at all events; for it's as dark as pitch now; bring me a candle, I can't shave by this light; there! leave the door into the parlor open, and tell John to come in and amuse me while I'm shaving. Is Mr. Archer up?"

"Oop? Weel Ay wot he is oop; and awa wi' Measter Draa, and t' lang goons, doon to t' brigg; to watch t' doocks flay, but Van Dyne says t' doocks has dean flaying."

"Yes, yes—they'se quit sartain," answered a merry voice without, and in stalked John, the best fowl-shot, the best snipe-marker, the best canoe-paddler, and the best fellow every way, in New Jersey.

"How are you, John?—any birds on the Piece?"

"Nicely!" he answered, to my first query—"nicely,"—shaking me warmly by the hand, and, after a pause, added, "I can't say as there be; the Piece is too wet altogether!"

"Too wet—aye? that's bad, John!"

"Lord, *yes*—too wet entirely; I was half over it with the canoe last week, and didn't see—no not half a dozen, and they was round the edges like, where there wasn't no good lying; there was a heap o' yellow legs, though, and a smart chance o' plover."

"Oh, hang the plover, John; but shall we find no snipe?"

"Not upon neither of the Pieces, no how—but there was heaps of them a flyin' over all last night; yes! yes! I guess Archer and I can fix it so as we'll git a few—but, do tell, who's that darned fat chap as I see goin' down—"

Here he was interrupted by the distant report of a heavy gun, followed almost upon the instant by a second.

"Ding!" he exclaimed, "but there's a flight now! ar'n't there? I guess now, Mr. Forester, I'd as well jist run down with old Shot, leastwise he'll fetch um, if so be they've fallen in the water."

"Do! do!" cried I, "by all means, John; and tell them to come back directly; for half the breakfast's on the table, and I'll be ready by the time they're here."

By the time I had got my jacket on, and while I was in the

act of pulling up my long fen boots before the cheerful fire, I perceived by the clack of tongues without, that the sportsmen had returned; and the next moment Harry entered, accompanied by Fat Tom in his glory, with no less than two couple and a half of that most beautiful and delicate of wild-fowl, the green-winged teal.

"That's not so bad, Frank," exclaimed Harry, depositing, as he spoke, his heavy single-barrel in the chimney-corner, and throwing himself into an arm-chair; "that's not so bad for ten minutes' work, is it?"

"Better, a darned sight," Tom chimed in, "than layin' snoozin' till the sun is high; but that's the way with these eternal drinkin' men, they does keep bright just so long as they keeps a liquorin'; but when that's done with, you don't hear nothin' more of them till noon, or arter. Cuss all sich drunken critters."

"That's a devilish good one," answered I; "the deuce a one of you has shaved, or for that matter, washed his face, to the best of my belief; and then, because you tumble out of bed like Hottentots, and rush out, gun in hand, with all the accumulated filth of a hard day's drive, and a long night's sweat, reeking upon you, you abuse a Christian gentleman, who gets up soberly, and dresses himself decently—for idleness and what not!"

"Soberly!" answered Tom;—"Soberly! Jest hear, now Harry,—Soberly!—jest like as though he hadn't a had his bitters, and blamed *bitter* bitters, too!"

"Not a drop, upon honor," I replied; "not a drop this morning!"

"What?—oh! oh! that's the reason, then, why you're so 'tarnal cross. Here, landlord, bring us in them cider sperrits—I harnt had only a small taste myself—take a drink, Frank, and you'll feel slick as silk torights, I tell you."

"Thank you, *no!*" said I, falling foul of the veal cutlets delicately fried in batter, with collops of ham interspersed, for which my worthy host is justly celebrated—"thank you, *no!* bitters are good things in their way, but not when breakfast treads so close upon the heels of them!"

"Tak a soop, Measter Frank—tak a soop, sur!" exhorted Timothy, who was bearing around a salver laden with tumblers, the decanter gracing his better hand. "Tak a soop, thou'lt be all t' betther for't enoo. Measter Draa's i' t' roight o' 't. It's varry good stooff Ay'se ophaud it."

"I dont doubt that at all, Tim; natheless I'll be excused just now."

I was soon joined at the table by the fat man and Archer, who were so busily employed in stowing away what Sir Dugald Dalgetty terms provant, that few words passed between us. At length when the *furor edendi* was partially suppressed: "Now then, John," said Harry, "we are going to be here two days—to-morrow, that is, and to-day—what are we to beat, so as to get ground for both days? Begin with the long meadow, I suppose, and beat the *vlies* toward the small piece home, and finish here before the door."

"That's it, I reckon," answered the jolly Dutchman, "but you knows pretty nigh as well as I can tell you."

"Better, John, better, if I knew exactly how the ground was—but that will be the driest, won't it?"

"Sartain," replied the other, "but we'll get work enough without beating the ground hereaways before the house; we'll keep that to begin upon to-morrow, and so follow up the big meadow, and to Loises, and all along under the widow Mulford's, if it holds dry to-day; and somehow now I kind o' guess it will. There'll be a heap o' birds there by to-morrow—they were a-flyin' cur'ous, now, last night, I tell you."

"Well, then, let us be moving. Where's the game-bag, Timothy? give it to John! Is the brandy bottle in it, and the luncheon? hey?"

"Ay, ay! Sur!" answered Tim; "t' brandy 's t' big wicker bottle, wi' t' tin cup—and soom cauld pork and crackers 'i t' gam bag—and a spare horn of powder, wi' a pund in 't. Here, tak it, John Van Dyne, and mooch good may't do ye—and—haud a bit, man! here's t' dooble shot belt, sling it across your shoulder, and awa wi' you."

Everything being now prepared, and having ordered dinner to be in readiness at seven, we lighted our cigars and started; Harry, with the two setters trotting steadily at his heels, and his gun on his shoulder, leading the way at a step that would have cleared above five miles an hour, I following at my best pace, Tom Draw puffing and blowing like a grampus in shoal water, and John Van Dyne swinging along at a queer loping trot behind me. We crossed the bridges and the causeway by which we had arrived the previous night, passed through the toll-gate, and, turning short to the right hand, followed a narrow sandy lane for some three quarters of a mile, till it turned

off abruptly to the left, crossing a muddy streamlet by a small wooden bridge. Here Harry paused, flung the stump of his cheroot into the ditch, and dropping the butt of his gun, began very quietly to load, I following his example without saying a word.

"Here we are, Frank," said he; "this long stripe of rushy fields, on both sides of the ditch, is what they call the long meadow, and rare sport have I had on it in my day, but I'm afraid it's too wet now—we'll soon see, though," and he strode across the fence, and waved the dogs off to the right and left. "You take the right hand, Frank; and Tom, keep you the ditch bank, all the way; the ground is firmest there; we've got the wind in our favor; a little farther off, Frank, they wont lie hard for an hour or two, at all events; and I don't believe we shall find a bird before we cross the next fence."

Heads up and sterns down, off raced the fleet setters, beating the meadows fairly from the right hand fence to the ditch, crossing each other in mid course, and quartering the ground superbly—but nothing rose before them, nor did their motions indicate the slightest taint of scent upon the dewy herbage. The ground, however, contrary to Harry's expectations, was in prime order—loose, loamy, moist, black soil, with the young tender grass of spring shooting up everywhere, bright, succulent and sweet; tall tufts of rushes here and there, and patches of brown flags, the reliques of the by-gone year, affording a sure shelter for the timid waders. The day was cool and calm, with a soft mellow light—for the sun was curtained, though not hidden, by wavy folds of gauze-like mist—and a delicious softness in the mild western breeze, before which we were wending our way, as every one who would bag *snipe*, must do, *down wind*. We crossed the second fence; the ground was barer, wetter, splashy in places, and much poached by the footsteps of the cattle, which had been pastured there last autumn. See, the red dog has turned off at a right angle from his course; he lifts his head high, straightens his neck and snuffs the air slackening his pace to a slow, guarded trot, and waving his stern gently—Chase sees him, pauses, almost backs!

"Look to, Frank—there's a bird before him!"

Skeap! skeap! skeap!—up they jumped eighty yards off at the least, as wild as hawks; skimming the surface of the meadow, and still by their shrill squeak calling up other birds to join them till seven or eight were on the wing together

then up they rose clearly defined against the sky, and wheeled in short zigzags above the plain, as if uncertain whither they should fly, till at length they launched off straight to the right hand, and after a flight of a full mile, pitched suddenly and steeply down behind a clump of newly budding birches.

"I knows where them jokers be, Mr. Archer," exclaimed Jan Dyne.

"In heaven, I guess they be," responded Master Draw; "leastwise they flew far enough to be there, anyhow!"

"No, no! Tom, they've not gone so very far," said Archer, "and there's good lying for them there, I shall be satisfied if they all go that way. To ho! to ho!" he interrupted himself, for the cogs had both come to a dead point among some tall flags; and Shot's head cocked on one side, with his nose pointed directly downward, and his brow furrowed into a knotty frown, showed that the bird was under his very feet. "Come up, Tom—come up, you old sinner—don't you see Shot's got a snipe under his very nose?"

"Well! well! I sees," answered Tom; "I sees it, darn you! but give a fellow time, you'd best, in this eternal miry mud-hole!" and, sinking mid leg deep at every step, the fat man floundered on, keeping, however, his gun ever in position, and his keen quick eye steadily fixed on the stanch setter.

"Are you ready, now? I'll flush him," exclaimed Harry, taking a step in advance; and instantly up sprang the bird, with his sharp, thrice-repeated cry, and a quick flutter of his wings, almost straight into the air over the head of Tom, striving to get the wind.

Bang! Draw's first barrel was discharged, the snipe being at that moment scarce ten feet from the muzzle, the whole load going like a bullet, of course harmlessly!—his second followed, but, like the first, in vain; for the bird, having fairly weathered him, was flying very fast, and twisting all the time, directly up wind. Then Harry's gun was pitched up, and the trigger drawn almost before the butt was at his shoulder. Down went the bird; slanting away six yards, though killed stone dead, in the direction of his former flight, so rapidly had he been going, when the shot struck him.

"Mark! mark!" I shouted, "Harry. Mark! mark! behind you!" As three more birds took wing, before the red dog, and were bearing off, too far from me, to the right hand, like those which had preceded them. I had, when I cried "mark," not

an idea that he could possibly have killed one; for he had turned already quite round in his tracks, to shoot the first bird, and the others had risen wild, in the first place, and were now forty yards off at the least; but quick as thought he wheeled again, cocking his second barrel in the very act of turning, and sooner almost than I could imagine the possibility of his even catching sight of them, a second snipe was fluttering down wing-tipped.

"Beautiful, beautiful indeed," I cried, involuntarily; "the quickest and the cleanest double-shot I have seen in many a day."

"It warn't so darned slow, no how," replied Tom, somewhat crest-fallen, as he re-loaded his huge demi-cannon.

"Slow! you old heathen! if you could shoot better than a boy five years old, we should have had three birds—I could have got two of those last just as well as not, if you had knocked the first down like a christian sportsman—but look! look at those devils," Harry went on, pointing toward the birds, which had gone off, and at which he had been gazing all the time; "confound them, they're going to drum!"

And so indeed they were; and for the first time in my life I beheld a spectacle, which I had heard of indeed, but never had believed fully, till my own eyes now witnessed it. The two birds, which had been flushed, mounted up! up! scaling the sky in short small circles, till they were quite as far from this dull earth, as the lark, when "at heaven's gate he sings"—and then dropt plumb down, as it would seem, fifty feet in an instant, with a strange drumming sound, which might be heard for a mile or more. Then up they soared again, and again repeated their manœuvre; while at each repetition of the sound another and another bird flew up from every part of the wide meadow, and joined those in mid ether; till there must have been, at the least reckoning, forty snipe soaring and drumming within the compass of a mile, rendering the whole air vocal with that strange quivering hum, which has been stated by some authors—and among these by the ingenious and observant Gilbert White—to be ventriloquous; although it is now pretty generally—and probably with justice—conceded to be the effect of a vibratory motion of the quill feathers set obliquely, so as to make the air whistle through them. For above an hour did this wild work continue; not a bird descending from its "bad eminence," but, on the contrary, each one that we

flushed out of distance, for they would not lie to the dogs at all, rising at once to join them. "We have no chance," said Harry, "no chance at all of doing anything, unless the day changes, and the sun gets out hot, which I fear it wont. Look out, Tom, watch that beggar to your right there; he has done drumming, and is going to 'light;'" and with the word, sheer down he darted some ninety yards from the spot where we stood, till he was scarce three feet above the marsh; when he wheeled off, and skimmed the flat, uttering a sharp harsh clatter, entirely different from any sound I ever heard proceed from a snipe's bill before, though in wild weather in the early spring time I have heard it since, full many a day. The cry resembled more the cackling of a hen, which has just laid an egg, than any other sound I can compare it to; and consisted of a repetition some ten times in succession of the syllable *kek*, so hard and jarring that it was difficult to believe it the utterance of so small a bird. But if I was surprised at what I heard, what was I, when I saw the bird alight on the top rail of a high snake fence, and continue there five or ten minutes, when it dropped down into the long marsh grass. Pointing toward the spot where I had marked it, I was advancing stealthily, when Archer said, "You may try if you like, but I can tell you that you wont get near him!" I persevered, however, and fancied I should get within long shot, but Harry was quite right; for he rose again skeap! skeap! and went off as wild as ever, towering as before, and drumming; but for a short time only, when, tired apparently of the long flight he had already taken, he stooped from his elevation with the same jarring chatter, and alighted—this time to my unmitigated wonder—upon the topmost spray of a large willow tree, which grew by the ditch side!*

"It's not the least use—not the least—pottering after these birds now," said Harry. "We'll get on to the farther end of the meadows, where the grass is long, and where they may li3 something better; and we'll beat back for these birds in the afternoon, if Dan Phœbus will but deign to shine out."

* I am aware that this will be difficulty believed even in the United States. But I will not, on that account, fail to record so singular a fact. Not a week before I saw this myself, I was told of the fact by a gentleman, since an Alderman, of New York; and I am now ashamed to say, doubted it. Michael Sanford, of Newark, N. J., was along with me, and can certify to the fact.

On we went, therefore, Tom Draw swearing strange oaths at the birds, that acted so darnation cur'ous, and at myself and Harry for being such eternal fools as to have brought him sweatin into them darned stinkin mud-holes; and I, to say the truth, almost despairing of success. In half an hour's walking we did, however, reach some ground, which—yielding far more shelter to the birds, as being meadow-land not pastured, but covered with coarse rushy tussocks—seemed to promise something better in the way of sport; and before we had gone many yards beyond the first fence, a bird rose at long distance to Tom's right, and was cut down immediately by a quick snap shot of that worthy, on whose temper, and ability to shoot, the firmer ground and easier walking had already begun to work a miracle.

“Who says I can't shoot now, no more than a five-year old, cuss you!” he shouted, dropping the butt of his gun deliberately, when skeap! skeap! startled by the near report, two more snipe rose within five yards of him!—fluttered he was assuredly, and fully did I expect to see a clear miss—but he refrained, took time, cocked his gun coolly, and letting the birds get twenty yards away, dropped that to his right hand, killed clean with his second barrel, while Harry doubled up the other in his accustomed style, I not having as yet got a chance of any bird.

“Down, charge!” said Harry; “down, charge! Shot, you villain!”—for the last bird had fallen wing-tipped only, and was now making ineffectual attempts to rise, bouncing three or four feet from the ground, with his usual cry, and falling back again only to repeat his effort within five minutes—this proved too much, as it seemed, for the poor dog's endurance, so that, after rising once or twice uneasily, and sitting down again at his master's word, he drew on steadily, and began roading the running bird, regardless of the score which he might have been well aware he was running up against himself. During this business Chase had sat pretty quiet, though I observed a nervous twitching of ears, and a latent spark of the devil in his keen black eye, which led me to expect some mischief, so that I kept my gun all ready for immediate action; and well it was that I did so; for the next moment he dashed in, passing Shot, who was pointing steadily enough, and picked up the bird after a trifling scuffle, the result of which was that a couple more snipe were flushed wild by the noise. Without a moment's hesitation I let drive at them with both barrels, knocking the right hand snipe

down very neatly; the left hand bird, however, pitched up a few feet just as I drew the trigger, and the consequence was that, as I fancied, I missed him clean.

"There! there! you stoopid, blundering, no-sich-thing—there! *now* who talks of missing? That was the nicest, prettiest, easiest shot I ever did see; and you—you shiftless nigger you—you talks to *me* of missing!"

"Shut up! shut up! you most incorrigible old brute!" responded Harry, who had been steadily employed in marking the missed bird, as I deemed him. "Shut up your stupid jaw! That snipe's as dead as the old cow you gave us for supper, the last time we slept at Warwick, though from a different cause; for the cow, Jem Flyn says, died of the murrain or some other foul rotten disorder; and that small winged fellow has got a very sufficient dose of blue pill to account for his decease! So shut up! and keep still while I take the change out of these confounded dogs, or we shall have every bird we get near to-day flushed like those two. Ha! Shot! Ha! Chase! Down cha-a-arge—down cha-a-arge—will you? will you? Down charge!"

And for about five minutes, nothing was heard upon the meadows but the resounding clang of the short heavy dog-whip, the stifled grunts of Shot, and the vociferous yells of Chase, under the merited and necessary chastisement.

"Down charge, now, will you?" he continued, as, pocketing his whip, he wiped his heated brow, picked up his gun, and proceeded to bag the scattered game. "There! that job's done," he said, "and a job that I hate most confoundedly it is—but it *must be done* now and then; and the more severely, when necessary, the more mercifully!"

"Now that's what I doos call a right down lie," the fat man interposed. "You loves it, and you knows you do—you loves to lick them poor dumb brutes, cause they can't lick back, no how. You, Chase, darn you, quit mouthing that there snipe—quit mouthing it, I say—else I'll cut out the snoopin soul of you!"

"So much for Tom Draw's lecture upon cruelty to animals—that's what I call rich!" answered Harry. "But come, let us get on. I marked that bird to a yard, down among those dwarf rose-bushes; and there we shall find, I'll be bound on it, good shooting. How very stupid of me not to think of that

spot! You know, John, we always find birds there, when they can't be found anywhere else."

On we went, after a re-invigorating cup of mountain-dew, with spirits raised at the prospect of some sport at last, and as we bagged the snipe which—Harry was right—had fallen killed quite dead, the sun came out hot, broad, and full. The birds were lying thick among the stunted bushes and warm bubbling springs which covered, in this portion of the ground, some twenty acres of marsh meadow; and as the afternoon waxed warm, they lay right well before the dogs, which, having learned the consequences of misdemeanor, behaved with all discretion. *We* shot well! and the sport waxed so fast and furious, that till the shades of evening fell, we had forgotten—all the three—that our luncheon, saving the article of drams, was still untasted; and that, when we assembled at seven of the clock in Hard's cozy parlor, and shook out of bag and pocket our complement of sixty-three well-grown and well-fed snipe, we were in reasonable case to do good justice to a right good supper.

THE PARTING DRINK.

BREAKFAST concluded, the next morning we pulled our fen boots on, and on the instant up rattled Timothy, who had disappeared a few minutes before, with the well-known drag to the door, guns stowed away, dogs whimpering, and sticking out their eager noses between the railings of the box—game bags well packed with lots of prog and of spare ammunition.

Away we rattled at a brisk pace, swinging round corner after corner, skilfully shaving the huge blocks of stone, and dexterously quartering the deep ravine-like ruts which grace the roads of Jersey—crossing two or three bridges over as many of those tributaries of the beautiful Passaic, which water this superb snipe-country—and reaching at least a sweep of smooth level road parallel to a long tract of meadows under the widow Mulford's. And here, *mort de ma vie!* that was a shot from the snipe-ground, and right on our beat, too—Ay! there are two guns, and two, three, pointers!—liver and white a brace, and one all liver.

"I know them," Harry said, "I know them, good shots and hard walkers both, but a little too much of the old school—a little too much of the twaddle and potter system. Jem Tickler, there, used, when I landed here, to kill as many birds as any shot out of the city—though even then the Jersey boys, poor Ward and Harry T—— gave him no chance; but now heaven help him! Fat Tom here would get over more ground, and bag more snipe, too, in a day! The other is a canny Scot,—I have forgot his name, but he shoots well and walks better. Never mind! we can outshoot them, I believe; and I am sure we can outmanœuvre them. Get away! get away, Bob," as he flanked the near-side horse under the collar on the inside—"get away you old thief—we must forereach on them." Away we went another mile, wheeled short to the left hand through a small bit of swampy woodland, and over a rough causeway, crossing a narrow flaggy bog, with three straight ditches, and a meandering muddy streamlet, traversing its black surface. "Ha! what's John at there?" exclaimed Harry, pulling short up, and pointing to that worthy crawling on all fours behind a tuft of high bullrushes toward the circuitous creek—"There are duck there for a thousand!"—and as he spoke, up rose with splash and quack and flutter, four or five long-winged wild-fowl; bang! went John's long duck-gun, and simultaneously with the report, one of the fowl keeled over, killed quite dead, two others faltering somewhat in their flight, and hanging on the air heavily for a little space; when over went a second into the creek, driving the water six feet into the air in a bright sparkling shower.

The other three, including the hit bird, which rallied as it flew, dived forward, flying very fast, obliquely to the road; and to my great surprise Harry put the whip on his horses with such vigor that in an instant both were on the gallop, the wagon bouncing and rattling violently on the rude log-floored causeway. An instant's thought showed me his object, which was to weather on the fowl sufficiently to get a shot, ere they should cross the road; although I marvelled still how he intended to pull up from the furious pace at which he was going in time to get a chance. Little space, however, had I for amazement; for the ducks, which had not risen high into the air, were forced to cross some thirty yards ahead of us, by a piece of tall woodland, on the verge of which were several woodcutters, with two or three large fires burning among the brushwood. "Now, Tom,"

cried Harry, feeling his horses' mouths as he spoke, but not attempting to pull up; and instantly the old man's heavy double rose steadily but quickly to his face—bang! neatly aimed, a yard ahead of the first drake, which fell quite dead into the ditch on the right hand of the causeway—bang! right across Harry's face, who leaned back to make room for the fat fellow's shot, so perfectly did the two rare and crafty sportsmen comprehend one another—and before I heard the close report, the second wild-duck slanted down wing-tipped before the wind, into the flags on the left hand, having already crossed the road when the shot struck him. The fifth and only now remaining bird, which had been touched by Van Dyne's first discharge, alighting in the marsh not far from his crippled comrade.

"Beautiful! beautiful indeed!" cried I; "that was the very prettiest thing—the quickest, smartest, and best calculated shooting I ever yet have seen!"

"We have done that same once or twice before though—hey, Tom?" replied Harry, pulling his horses well together, and gathering them up by slow degrees—not coming to a dead stop till we had passed Tom's first bird, some six yards or better. "Now jump out, all of you; we have no time to lose; no not a minute! for we *must* bag these fowl; and those two chaps we saw on Mulford's meadows, are racing now at their top speed behind that hill, to cut into the big meadow just ahead of us, you may rely on that. You, Timothy, drive on under that big pin oak—take off the bridles—*halter* the horses to the tree, *not* to the fence—and put their sheets and hoods on, for, early as it is, the flies are troublesome already. Then mount the game-bags and be ready—by the time you're on foot we shall be with you. Forester, take the red dog to Van Dyne, that second bird of his will balk him else, and I sha'nt be surprised if he gets up again! Pick up that mallard out of the ditch as you go by—he lies quite dead at the foot of those tall reeds. Come, Tom, load up your old cannon, and we'll take Shot, bag that wing-tipped duck, and see if we can't nab the crippled bird, too! come along!"

Off we set without further parley; within five minutes I had bagged Tom's first, a rare green-headed Drake, and joined Van Dyne, who, with the head and neck of his first bird hanging out of his breeches pocket, where, in default of game-bag, he had stowed it, was just in the act of pouring a double handful of BB into his Queen's Ann's musket. Before he had loaded, we

heard a shot across the road, and saw the fifth bird fall to Harry at long distance, while Shot was gently mouthing Draw's second duck, to his unutterable contentment. We had some trouble in gathering the other, for it was merely body-shot, and that not mortally, so that it dived like a fish, bothering poor Chase beyond expression. This done, we re-united our forces, and instantly proceeded to the big meadow, which we found, as Harry had anticipated, in the most perfect possible condition—the grass was short, and of a delicate and tender green, not above ankle deep, with a rich close black mould, moist and soft enough for boring everywhere, under foot—with, at rare intervals, a slank, as it is termed in Jersey, or hollow winding course, in which the waters have lain longer than elsewhere, covered with a deep, rust-colored scum, floating upon the stagnant pools. We had not walked ten yards before a bird jumped up to my left hand, which I cut down—and while I was in the act of loading, another and another rose, but scarcely cleared the grass ere the unerring shot of my two stanch companions had stopped their flight forever. Some ten yards from the spot on which my bird had fallen, lay one of these wet slanks which I have mentioned—Chase drew on the dead bird and pointed—another fluttered up under his very nose, dodged three or four yards to and fro, and before I could draw my trigger, greatly to my surprise, spread out his wings and settled. Harry and Tom had seen the move, and walked up to join me; just as they came Chase retrieved the snipe I had shot, and when I had entombed it in my pocket, we moved on all abreast. Skeap! skeap! skeap! Up they jumped, not six yards from our feet, positively in a flock, their bright white bellies glancing in the sun, twenty at least in number. Six barrels were discharged, and six birds fell; we loaded and moved on, the dogs drawing at every step, backing and pointing, so foiled was the ground with the close scent; again, before we had gathered the fruit of our first volley, a dozen birds rose altogether; again six barrels bellowed across the plain, and again Tom and Harry slew their shots right and left, while I, alas! shooting too quick, missed one! I know what I aver will hardly be believed, but it is true, notwithstanding; a third time the same thing happened, except that instead of twelve, thirty or forty birds rose at the least, six of which came again to earth, within, at farthest, thirty paces—making an aggregate of eighteen shots, fired in less, assuredly, than so many minutes, and seventeen birds fairly brought to bag. These

pocketed, by twos and threes Van Dyne had marked the others down in every quarter of the meadow—and, breaking off, singly or in pairs, we worked our will with them. So hard, however, did they lie, that many could not be got up again at all. In one instance I had marked four, as I thought, to a yard, between three little stakes, placed in the angles of a plat, not above twenty paces in diameter—taking Van Dyne along with me, who is so capital a marker that for a *dead* bird I would back him against any retriever living—I went without a dog to walk them up. But no! I quartered the ground, re-quartered it, crossed it a third time, and was just quitting it despairing, when a loud shout from John, a pace or two behind, warned me they were on wing! Two crossed me to the right, one of which dropped to John's Queen Ann almost as soon as I caught sight of them, and one to my left. At the latter I shot first, and, without waiting to note the effect of my discharge, turned quickly and fired at the other. Him I saw drop, for the smoke drifted, and as I turned my head, I scarcely can believe it now, I saw my first bird falling. I concluded he had fluttered on some small space, but John Van Dyne swears point blank that I shot so quick that the second bird was *on* the ground before the first had reached it. In this—a solitary case, however—I fear John's famed veracity will scarce obtain for him that credit, or for me that renown, to which he deemed us both entitled.

Before eleven of the clock, we had bagged forty-seven birds; we sat down in the shade of the big pin oak, and fed deliciously, and went our way rejoicing, toward the upper meadows, fully expecting that before returning we should have doubled our bag.

But, alas! the hopes of men!—Troy meadows were too dry—Persipany too wet—Loise's had been beat already, and not one snipe did we even see or hear, nor one head of game did we bag; the morning's sport, however, had put us in such merry mood that we regarded not the evening's disappointment, and we sat down in great glee to supper. What we devoured, or what we drank, it boots not to record; but it was late at night before the horses were ordered, and we prepared for a start.

After the horses were announced as ready, somewhat to my surprise, Harry took old Tom aside, and was engaged for some time in deep conversation; and when they had got through with it, Harry shook him very warmly by the hand, saying—

“Well, Tom, I am sincerely obliged to you; and it is not the first time either.”

"Well, well, boy," responded Tom, "I guess it 'taint the first time as you've said so, though I don't know right well what for neither. Any how, I hope 't won't be the last time as I'll fix you as you wants to be. But come, it's gittin' late, and I've got to drive Hard's horse over to Paterson to-night."

"Oh, that will not be much," said Harry. "It is but nine miles, and we are twenty from New York."

"Any how, we must take a partin' drink, and I stands treat. I showed Beers Hard how to make that egg nog. Timothy—Timothy, you darned critter, bring in that ere egg nog."

This was soon done, and Tom, replenishing all the glasses to the brim, said very solemnly, "this is a toast, boys, *now* a raal bumper."

Harry grinned conscious. I stood, waiting, wondering.

"Here's luck!" said Tom, "luck to Harry Archer, a landholder in our own old Orange!"

The toast was quaffed in an instant; and, as I drew my breath, I said—

"Well, Harry, I congratulate you, truly. So you have bought the Jem Burt Place?"

"Thanks to old Tom, dog cheap!" replied Archer; "and I have only to say, farther, that early in the Autumn, I hope to introduce you, and all my old friends, to the interior of the new box."

MY SHOOTING BOX.

CHAPTER I.

ENGLISH AND AMERICAN GAME.

IT wanted scarce an hour of sunset, on a calm, bright October evening—that season of unrivalled glory in the wide woodlands of America, wherein the dying year appears to deck herself, as it is told of the expiring dolphin, with such a gorgeousandness of short-lived hues as she had never shown in her full flush of summer life and beauty—it wanted, as I have said, scarce an hour of sunset, and all the near and mountainous horizon was veiled as it were by a fine gauze-like drapery of filmy yellow mist, while every where the level sunbeams were checkering the scenery with lines of long rich light and cool blue shadow, when a small four-wheeled wagon with something sportsmanlike and rakish in its build, might have been seen whirling at a rapid rate over one of the picturesque uneven roads, that run from the banks of the Hudson, skirting the lovely range of the Western Highlands, through one—the fairest—of the river counties of New York. This little vehicle, which was drawn by an exceedingly clever, though somewhat cross-made, chesnut cob, with a blaze on his face, and three white legs, contained two persons, with a quantity of luggage, among which a couple of gun-cases were the most conspicuous, and a brace of beautiful and high-bred English pointers. The driver was a smart natty lad, dressed in a dark gray frock, with livery buttons, and a narrow silver cord for

a hat-band; and, while he handled the ribbons with the quick finger and cool head of an experienced whip, he showed his complete acquaintance with the way, by the readiness and almost instinctive decision with which he selected the right hand or the left of several acute and intricate turns and crossings of the road. The other was a young gentleman of some five or six and twenty years, finely and powerfully made, though not above the middle height, with curly light-brown hair and a fair bright complexion, indicative of his English blood. Rattling along the limestone road, which followed the course of a large rapid trout stream, that would in Europe have been termed a river, crossing it now and then on rustic wooden bridges, as it wound in broad devious curves hither and thither through the rich meadow-land, they reached a pretty village, embosomed in tall groves and pleasant orchards, crowning a little knoll with its white cottages and rival steeples; but, making no pause, though a neat tavern might well have tempted the most fastidious traveller, they swept onward, keeping the stream on their right hand, until, as they came to the foot of a small steep ascent, the driver touched his hat, saying - "We have got through our journey now, sir; the house lies just beyond the hill." He scarce had finished speaking, before they topped the hillock, and turning short to the right hand pulled up before a neat white gate in a tall fence, that separated the road from a large piece of woodland, arrayed in all the gorgeous colors wrought by the first sharp frost of autumn. The well-kept winding lane, to which the gate gave access, brought them, within a quarter of a mile, to a steep rocky bank feathered with junipers, and here and there a hickory or maple shadowing the dense undergrowth of rhododendrons, kalmias and azalias that sprung in rich luxuriance from every rift and cranny of the gray limestone ledges. Down this the road dived, by two rapid zig-zags, to

the margin of the little river, which foamed along its base, where it was spanned by a single arch, framed picturesquely of gnarled unbarked timber; and then swept in an easy curve up a small lawn, lying fair to the southern sun, to the door of a pretty cottage, which lay midway the northern slope of the valley, its rear sheltered by the hanging woodlands, which clothed the hills behind it to their very summit. A brilliant light was shining from the windows to the right of the door, as if of a merry fire and several candles mingled; and, in a minute or two after the wheels of the wagon rattled upon the wooden bridge, it was evident that the door was thrown open; for a long stream of mellow light burst out on the fast darkening twilight, and the next moment a tall figure, clearly defined against the bright background, was seen upon the threshold. A minute more and the chesnut cob was pulled up in front of the neat portico, and the young Englishman leaped out and darted up the steps.

“Well, Fred, you’re here at last—”

“Harry, old fellow, by Jupiter! but I’m glad to see you!”

“And so am I right glad, Fred, and really obliged to you for coming up to see me here in the mountains. I would have come down to the river myself for you, but I had to ride over into Deer Park after breakfast, to get a match for Master Bob there”—pointing as he spoke to the chesnut cob, which, not a with the worse for his long rapid drive, stood champing his light bit and pawing up the gravel, as if he had but just been brought out of his stable. “I hope he brought you up in good style, Fred?”

“That he did, Harry; that he did; in prime style! Two hours and forty minutes from—Newburg don’t you call it?—up to your gate here; and that’s twenty-eight good miles, I fancy—”

“Thirty, Fred, thirty; every yard of it It’s twenty-

eight and better to the village—but come in, come in, and, you sir, get out all the traps and put them in the hall till Timothy has time to look to them, and take Bob round to the stables and go to work upon him. What are those—pointers, Fred? Exactly! well, put them in the little kennel by themselves, and see they are well fed and bedded. Pointers are no use here, Fred. English-broke pointers, I would say—they range too high, and cannot face our coverts. But come in. I was just taking a cup of coffee and a weed; for I dined early, knowing that you could not be here in time; and we will have some supper by and by, and in the mean time you shall either join me in the Mocha, or have a long cool drink, or something short, just as you fancy it.”

And with the words, my old friend Harry Archer for the host was no other than that worthy, who had exchanged his *menage* in the city for a snug shooting-box among the hills of Warwick—led his old friend, who had but lately landed from the Boston steamer, through a small vestibule adorned with stands of myrtle and geranium and two or three camellias, into a narrow hall or passage, the walls of which were decked with several pairs of red deer antlers—whence swung full many a sylvan implement—a map or two of the adjoining states, and several of Herring’s life-like portraits—the champions of the English turf, the winners of the Leger and the Derby.

“This is but a little box, Heneage,” said Harry as they entered—“My *one* spare bed is literal. There were but four rooms in the house when I bought it; unless you count the garrets, which are not habitable; but I have built a kitchen and two or three servants’ rooms behind; and so we must make shift till I get rich enough to add some more bed-chambers—the people hereabout swear that I am crazy, and that I lodge my horses and my dogs better than I do myself.

But if it is small, Fred, it is snug and clean; and with the word he threw open a door to the right, and leading his friend into a little library—"this is my snugery," he added, "and that," pointing to a door opposite the windows, which were two in number, reaching to the ground and overlooking the lawn and river, "that is my bed-room. Across the *hall*, as we call it by a liberal courtesy, is the dining-room, and behind it your dormitory. Now, then, take this arm-chair by the fire—and here comes Timothy—you've not forgotten Timothy, Fred? It's Mister Heneage, Tim!"

"Nay! but ay's vara glad to see thee," exclaimed Harry's inimitable Yorkshireman, pulling his toplock with his left hand, while he thrust out the other horny paw with a grin of unfeigned delight—"Ay's very glad to see thee i' these pairs—noo, damn me if ay isn't! An' hoo's they aw i' Yor'shire?"

"Right well, Tim; all our friends; all that I think of, that's to say—but I see you stick to Mr. Archer, yet, Tim!"

"Stick tull him—weel ay wot—he wad na get along at aw without me, He's got faive horses oot i' t'stable, and seven dogs i' t' kennel; forbye auld Charon—for *he* gangs whaure he wull—and hoo'd he do without Tim Matlock! Nay! nay, ay's niver quit him, Measter Heneage; but ay'll gang noo and fetch oop soom hot coffee—or mayhap, sur, you'd take a soop o' t' auld Shrub or Glenlivat."

"No, no Tim, coffee by all means—and now I'll blow a cloud, so hand me—ha! do you stick to the Manillas as of old? Well, it is certainly impossible for any thing to be nicer or more comfortable than this."

And well might he say so; for though the room was small, not above eighteen feet by sixteen, with a low ceiling and large projecting mantelpiece, and though the

furniture was simple and by no means expensive, nothing could be more truly or more tastefully complete. A large bookcase of the black walnut of the country filled the recesses on either hand the fire-place, their glass doors showing a well chosen library of something more than a thousand volumes, classics and history, and the best English poets and romances, with a few French and Italian writers, in elegant and costly bindings. The space above the fire-place was filled, instead of a mirror, by a large case with a sliding front of plate glass, containing an arm-rack lined with crimson velvet, well garnished with two superb twin double-barrelled guns, by Purday, a heavy ounce-ball rifle, by the same prince of makers, a short but large-bored twelve pound duck gun, a case of nine-inch pistols, by old Kuchenreuter, a smaller brace, by Manton; and three or four hunting knives, of various sizes and construction. On either side the door, which led to the bed-chamber, stood a small slab or table, the one arranged with ink-standish, portfolio, *presse papier* and all the apparatus of the scribe; the other covered with powder-flasks and shot-pouches, screw-drivers, dog-whips, drinking-flasks, and, in short, every thing a sportsman could require, not thrown about at random, but all displayed symmetrically, and bright and free from dust. The walls were hung with several excellent line engravings, from sporting subjects, by Landseer. The floor was carpeted with a grave but rich Brussels, which was not unpleasantly relieved by the deep crimson curtains and cushions of the massive old-fashioned settees and sofas, with which the room was bountifully furnished. A large round centre table, with a crimson cloth, supported a tall brass reading lamp, and was strewn thickly with portfolios of good engravings, an annual or two, the Spirit of the Times, and the last numbers of the Turf Register, with several English Sporting Magazines, and other periodicals; but it was now pushed back from the

fire toward the large, soft-cushioned sofa which occupied the whole length of the opposite wall, and its place taken for the nonce by a small trivet, on which stood an antique salver, with a coffee pot and sugar dish of richly chased and massive silver, a cut-glass cream jug, with a small stand of liqueurs, two tiny glasses, and two coffee cups of Sevres china. A pile of hickory logs was crackling and flashing cheerfully upon the hearth; a pair of wax candles were blazing on the mantel-piece, the superannuated Russian setter, to whom Tim had alluded, was dozing on the rug; and, heedless of the neighborhood of her natural foe, a beautiful, soft, tortoise-shell cat sat purring on the arm of Harry Archer's own peculiar settle. Such was the aspect of the room, which Heneage, fresh as he was from London and all the finished comforts of English country-houses, in the first month of his first visit to America, pronounced the very acme of perfection, as a bachelor's establishment.

“Wait till you see my stables, and my kennel, my quail house, where I save them through the winter, my little flower garden, and my dairy, and my ice-house. We have turned Jacks of all trades, Timothy and I. And now, with the exception of my *old* woman, for—this is a very moral country, and I am, you know, a *very* moral man—to save my character, I got the ugliest and oldest cook in all America—upon my soul I sometimes fancy she must have been in the ark with Noah!—with the exception as I say, of my old woman, you have seen all the members of my *menage*. She cooks and makes the beds, and cleans the chambers, as she persists in calling the bed-rooms, being of course a Yorkshire woman—Tim would have died had I got even a Northumbrian—and Timothy is butler, and stud-groom, and valet, and game-keeper, and, of late, I believe head gardener; and that imp, Dick, who drove you up, with an extraordinary negro genius, who never

takes his clothes off from one year's end to the other, or sleeps in a bed, summer or winter, preferring the hay-loft at all seasons, do all the work of the house, garden, kennel, stable, and of my little farm; just twenty acres, Fred! on which I feed two Alderneys, and fatten yearly a dozen or two of right black-faced Moor mutton."

Meantime the friends discussed their coffee, and puffed their favorite cheroots, and, meeting now for the first time in many years, chatted of many things, and called old scenes to mind, and asked and received tidings of many an ancient friend, and passed, in short, two hours as pleasantly as could have been desired if they had planned it, until the door was opened, and Timothy thrust in his sleek black head at the aperture, informing them that "T" sooper was ready noo, and wad be cold if they waited ony langer"—a piece of information which brought them to their legs with speed; and not them only, but Master Charon likewise, who, though he had been voted slow and superfluous in the field, had yet abated nothing in the keenness of his nose, so far at least as meal times were concerned, come as often as they might. The dining-room, which was precisely of the same dimensions with the library, was furnished with the same nice attention to details, the same harmonious taste, which imparted an appearance of luxury and richness to articles in themselves by no means extraordinary. The curtains and all the furniture, as in the other room, were crimson, the hues of the carpet in some sort matching them; a large sideboard of black walnut faced the fire-place, glittering with fine cut glass and a small but beautiful selection of old-fashioned silver, among which shone resplendent a superb cup, or vase, won by the prowess of the owner at the Red House, against no few or mean competitors in pigeon shooting, and two tall richly gilded tankards, watching like sentries on the flanks of the array. The

table was drawn up close to the fire, which blazed with a fierceness that would have been almost intolerable, but for a screen that intercepted a portion of its heat, and was covered by a cloth of dazzling whiteness, whereon was arranged a supper service with two covers, in a style so accurate and tempting as to have pleased the sagest *gourmet*, while the morocco armed chairs, which stood at either end, promised a world of voluptuous comfort. The whole room was one blaze of light, and nothing could by any means have been conceived more cheerful than the aspect of the whole.

“Now, Fred,” said Harry as they entered, “I trust your drive has given you an appetite, for I have no doubt Timothy has got us something tolerably eatable. What is it, hey, Tim?”

“Nay, sur, ay’s sure ay canna tell ye; for ay’s been sorting Measter Heneage’s things loike, and suppering oop t’ twa pointer dogs he brought wi’ him.”

“Well, well, take off the covers and let us see. Broiled wood duck here; which I can recommend, Fred; they are as good a bird as flies, excepting always the royal canvas-back—let me give you a half a one; with a squeeze of that lemon, and a dash of Cayenne, you’ll find it more than passable. There, cover those cock up again, Tim, and put them by the fire—are those the birds I shot yesterday? Exactly; that’s right!—let’s see those side dishes—ha! cauliflowers *à la creme*, and stewed cellery. Now then, Fred, what wine? There’s some dry still Champagne in ice there, if you like it; and some pale Sherry here, that I think good; there’s claret in the cellar; but I think the weather’s too cold for Bourdeaux—Port does not suit this climate; but I’ve got some Madeira that will do your heart good.”

“Oh! Champagne, Harry, Champagne for supper always. Your Sherry and Madeira are dinner wines, *me judice*.”

"I agree with you, Fred; open that long neck, Timothy. Well, now, what think you of the wood duck?"

"Excellent—good indeed—but why do you call it *wood* duck, Harry?" answered Heneage, with his mouth half full of the tender juicy broil.

"Because they live in woods, Fred; and perch, and build their nests in trees."

"Oh! humbug! that's a touch too much of a good thing, old fellow."

"It's true, though, every word of it. You'll find game here one thing, and game in England quite another, I can tell you, Master Fred—aye! and covert shooting here, in these wild swamps and wooded hills, a very different sort of matter from a Norfolk battu. The big glasses, Tim, the long-stemmed beakers!" he interposed; and his orders were speedily obeyed; and the rich dry Champagne stood mantling, with no cream, and a few bead-like bubbles only floating around the brim, in two tall half-pint goblets of Venetian crystal.

"By George! but that *is* splendid, Harry," exclaimed Fred Heneage, as the seductive liquor disappeared. "Yes! half a woodcock if you please."

"No half about the matter, Fred; they are but little chaps, these woodcocks of America—not half so big as ours. But then, they positively swarm here."

"Why aye!" responded Heneage, receiving the whole bird, which Harry sent to him, with all complacency. "Why aye! Frank Forester, whom I saw for an hour or two in New York, told me—by the way, I forgot to tell you that he says he will be here on Friday. Where will you stow him?"

"O, I make *point de façon* with Master Frank. He will take Tim's room, I suppose; who will turn Dick out; that is to say, if he does not prefer a room at old Draw's, in the village. I often stow my supernumeraries there. What did he tell you anent the woodcock?"

“Oh, I don't know—some wondrous yarn or other; I did not pay much attention, or believe one half what he said—something about killing them by hundreds in a day.”

“Well, so we do; the commodore and I bagged last year, between sunrise and sunset, one hundred and fifteen.”

“Not really! And how many shall we get to-morrow?”

“Try another glass of Champagne, Fred, and then I'll explain. Do you think this too cold?”

“No! perfection. A bit of that cauliflower if you please. Now, then, about to-morrow.”

“Why, Fred, this is *fall* shooting, as we call it here; and, in the autumn, birds are not to be found in such swarms as in July—nevertheless, it is a very good year—there has been quite a sharp frost these last three nights, to the northward, and they are coming in fast. I have killed none to speak of yet, and not a gun but mine has been fired in the valley these two months. So I think we are sure of sport. I shall kill from twenty-five to thirty cock off my own gun to-morrow, and Frank would do nearly as much, if he were up here. You, I suppose will get fifteen—”

“Cool that, by Jupiter!” replied Fred Heneage—“why, I can beat Frank Forester like bricks!”

“You *could*—you mean to say—you *could* beat him three years ago in a Norfolk turnip field.”

“Yes could I, or on a Scottish moor, or in an Irish bog.”

“I dare say—I dare say,” responded Harry, very coolly; “but you see, Fred, a Scottish moor and an Irish bog are vastly different things from a Yankee swamp, as you will find, before you have been out an hour to-morrow. The first requires, I admit, the wind and sinews of a mountaineer, the pluck of a prize fighter, and the endurance of a Captain Barclay,—the

second cannot be braved with impunity but by one who can 'bound from hag to hag,' as Scott has said it, 'like any Bilhope stag;' but the unstable bottom, the fallen trunks, the mossy tussocks under foot, the tangled vines and thorny briars woven in strange inextricable mazes about your knees and thighs, and even up to your breast and face, the dense impenetrable foliage over head, the impossibility of seeing your dog half the time, although he may be on a dead point ten feet from you—the necessity of firing nine shots out of ten, even when pointed, as if they were chance shots—of killing above half your birds, if you kill them at all, by firing on an instinctive calculation of their line, seeing them only 'with the eye of faith,' as poor J. Cypress, Jr. used to call it—all these things, and the farther fact that two at least of the winged game of these regions—the quail, namely, and the ruffed grouse—are the quickest and strongest on the wing, the hardest to hit at all, and the most difficult to stop by hitting, of any birds that fly—make the odds very great that the best English shot will bungle it cruelly for the first season; and if he shoots well on the second, I call him a right apt disciple. And so I say that if you *could* beat Frank like bricks three years ago, he can beat you three times as badly now. His first year he shot shamefully, though he, like you, had the advantage of beginning in the autumn, when most of the leaf was down. I, on the contrary, commenced in July, when every thing is in full leaf, and such a flush of foliage, as you cannot conceive from any thing you ever saw at home. Now Frank shoots at least as well again as he did when he left home, and you will not shoot half as well as you did, at least for the first year—after that you will improve at once, and if you stay here three or four seasons you will astonish yourself when you get home, or, what is the same thing, when you by accident get any open shooting."

“Well, it may be so—I suppose it is, if you say so, but I don’t know. Did you ever shoot badly here?”

“Not badly—no, Fred,” answered Harry, “badly is not the word at all—infamously!—I shot infamously the first year.”

“And do you really shoot better now than you did at home?—you were a good shot always.”

“So much so that I very often think it would be impossible for me to miss a shot at all in partridge shooting, or one in six in battu. But come, we have got through our game. Timothy, look alive, man—bring the caviare, and devilled biscuits, and what will you have by way of tippie, Fred?—a bowl of mulled wine, or some hot rum punch? I’ve got some very old pineapple rum; or simple whiskey toddy?—the Farintosh is undeniable I tell you.”

“Why, Harry, I believe the rum punch is the thing.”

“Very well—see here, Timothy, hand this caviare to Mr. Heneage, and fill us out a thimble full a piece of that curious white cogniac; and look sharp, and bring a tankard full of water screeching hot, and a flask of the rum from the second locker, a bottle of Scotch whiskey, sugar and lemons, and the cigar box. Now then, take a bit of the biscuit, Fred, and a taste of caviare—wash it down with that brandy—that is a curiosity; white brandy is rare in this country, but I imported this myself. And now, when Timothy comes back, we’ll transplant ourselves to the chimney corner—have a small trivet just to hold our glasses and materials, and blow a cloud till bed time.” Many minutes did not elapse before these preparations were effected, the supper table cleared, the smoking punch and toddy brewed to the several tastes of the companions, the choice manillas lighted, and a small cloud of thin gray smoke curling in lazy wreaths about the heads of either friend. For some brief space they sat in silence, both wrapped, as it appeared, in a voluptuous calm ab-

straction, the natural consequence perhaps of satiated appetite, aided by the soft influence of the soothing weed; but both in reality thinking, and that too rather deeply, on matters growing out of their late conversation. Harry was pondering in his mind whether of two beats would be preferable for to-morrow? the one being by far the better for woodcock, but in bad rotten ground and exceedingly thick coverts; the other much opener and easier shooting, but not by any means so favorite lying for the long billed birds of passage; while Heneage was ruminating on all that he had heard, and marvelling not a little, and half doubtful whether he was not the subject of some wilful mystification, touching American field sports on the part of his companion. After awhile, however, he raised his eyes to a large and fine oil painting which hung over the fireplace, and which, from the accidental position of both the argand lamps on one—and that the right—end of the mantel-piece, was clearly visible in its best light. At first, his eyes fell on it by mere chance, and then were riveted by the grand massing of the light and shadow, before he had so much as observed the subject of the painting. He was then on the point of speaking, and asking his friend something of the artist, when an idea struck him, and he examined it, not with a critic's only, but a sportsman's eye; for, like most of the decorations of Harry's shooting box, it was connected with those matters that were for the most part uppermost in the mind of the owner. It was a large and nobly executed piece—a view of a narrow woodland lane expanding in the foreground of the piece into an open meadow, where it was closed by a set of strong timber bars. The wood and winding lane were actually nature—the gnarled and mossy trunks of the large trees just gilded on their western edges by the ruddy beams of the declining sun, the rich autumnal foliage over head here opening to let in long penciled rays of

living yellow lustre, there blackening into twilight shades, impervious to the strongest light; and the mossy green-sward, checkered with slant gleams and long shadow, and the sandy lane most naturally varying from the brightest tints of ochre to the deepest umber, as it was touched by sunshine, or overhung by heavy foliage. The left hand foreground of the picture was occupied by a tall oak, its deep brown coppery umbrage casting a massive gloom over the earth below it, while here and there a flickering glance of gold gleamed on its rough boll between the sere leaves. In the front of this, brought into strong and palpable relief, for it was in broad light, stood a stout-built gray pony, with a long tail and heavy tangled mane, looking out of the corner of his eye with a half vicious glance, as if more than half inclined to kick at a spaniel, which seemed to be tickling his forelegs by the feathery motion of his thick silky tail. A saddle lay ungirt by the dog, with its strappings, crupper and stirrups and surcingle, cast in disorder on the ground, as it had been flung down by the smock-frocked urchin who leaned against the rails, holding the bridle carelessly in one hand thrust under his frock, and watching the actions of the principal personage, a stout, athletic man, with shooting-jacket, game-bag, boots and leather leggins, who was employed, a little way advanced before the rest, in smoothing down the feathers of a superb cock-pheasant, which he was holding up by the neck with his right hand, its varying and gorgeous hues glittering and glowing in rare mimicry of life. A large hare and small rabbit hung by their heels from the top rails of the fence, while a great pile of game, composed of hares and pheasants only, was heaped up at the sportman's feet, his double-barrelled gun leaning against a post in the extreme right foreground, a bright and golden glitter falling upon the yellow bank, and the light foliage of the bushes just behind it, and sleeping lovingly upon

the sere and faded herbage that lay below, with every blade of grass, and shivered stick, and small white pebble, laughing out all distinct and sharp in the soft sunset. No words, however, can describe, so as to convey an idea of its *vraisemblance*, the strong reality, and truthfulness, of that noble picture; and Harry Archer, as he observed his friend, whom he knew to be an amateur and connoisseur of no mean judgment or ability, said nothing, but, supposing only that he was admiring its very visible and striking beauties, relapsed into his own reverie; from which he was aroused at length by a loud burst of laughter from Fred Heneage. Looking up, not amazed a little at this sudden interruption, he was encountered by an expression so funnily and joyously triumphant in the face of Fred, that he was constrained to laugh as he asked,

“What now—what the devil’s in the wind now, Heneage?”

“So you’ve been humbugging as usual—stuffing me—at your old tricks—hang it!—but I’ll pay you for it.”

“Now what *do* you mean in the name of all that’s wonderful?” Harry exclaimed, himself quite mystified. “I have not stuffed you; and, in truth, I cannot even guess what you are driving at.”

“Oh! no—not you, I warrant you—here you’ve been cramming me all night about ruffed grouse, and quail, and *wood* ducks, and Heaven only knows what else; and making me eat snipe under the name of woodcock—though they were mighty large snipe I must acknowledge—just for the sake of cramming me that woodcock in America were not woodcock. I suppose you think I have never read about pheasant shooting in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and partridge shooting in Virginia and New York. But no you don’t—no you don’t, master judge! I am not to be had to night.”

“Faith! but you *are* had pretty thoroughly. Oh! how I wish Frank Forester were here—but I’ll tell him—I’ll tell him if I die for it, and he shall cook it up for some of the magazines, that’s poz. But how did you find out that you were had, Fred?”

“Why, I tell you, I have read books about America, if I never have been here before, and I *know* that there are pheasants in Pennsylvania, and partridges in New York and Virginia.”

“Well, well, I grant that—I grant that—but did you chance to read, too, that the partridge of New York is *not* the partridge of Virginia—and farther yet, that the partridge of New York *is* the pheasant of Pennsylvania and New Jersey? And farther, once again, that neither the partridge of New York nor the partridge of Virginia is a partridge at all—nor the pheasant of any place on this side the Atlantic a pheasant?”

“No, Harry, I never did read that—and you may just as well stop stuffing me, when I sit here with the proof of your villany before my eyes.”

“Where, Fred—where is the proof—hang me if I know where you are in the least!—where is the proof?”

“Why this is too much! Do you think I’m blind, man?—there!—there in that picture!—don’t I see pheasants there, and hares too?”

“Oh! yes, Fred—yes, indeed!” shouted Archer, choking down a convulsive laugh, that would burst out, at times almost overpowering him. “Yes, that is it, certainly—and those are hares and pheasants—and that’s a right smart Jersey trotter, I some guess—a critter that can travel like a strick—and the boy holding him—that’s a Long Island nigger, now, I calkilate,—oh, ya—as! and that’s a Yorker on a gunnin’ scrape, stringin’ them pheasants! ya—as;” and he spoke with so absurd an imitation and exaggeration of the Yankee twang and drawl, that he set Heneage laughing, though he was still more than half indignant.

“No!” he said, when he recovered himself a little, —“no, I didn’t say that—the boy is not a nigger.”

“A white nigger, I some think!” responded Archer, still on the broad grin.

“No, not a nigger at all—and that does not look much like an American fast trotter either—nor has that man much the cut of a New Yorker.”

“No. I should think not *very much*. Negroes are not for the most part white—and, as you say, American trotters have not *in general* quite so much hair about their fetlocks, or quite such lion manes—it might do for a Canadian, though—but then unluckily they are not apt to be white!—and certainly you might travel from Eastport to Green Bay and not meet a man with laced half boots and English leggins, unless you chanced to stumble on your most obedient; and as to the blue Leicester smock frock, such as that lad has got on this side the Atlantic—but never mind, Fred, never mind. That grey cob is quite as much like Ripton or Americus, and that little fat-faced chaw-bacon is as much like a Long Island nigger, and that broad shouldered Yorkshire gamekeeper more like a New York gunner, than those long-tailed, green-headed, golden-breasted pheasants to any American fowl, be he called what he may. Why Heaven preserve your wits, Fred! That is an English picture, by an exceeding clever Royal Academician. Lee!—Fred, you must have heard of him! ‘A Day in the Woods’ he called it, and a right good day’s work he has made of it. Now, listen to me; there is not one wild bird or beast in America, unless it be a few ducks, that is precisely similar to its European congeners. The woodcock is a distinct variety, *Scolopax minor*, rarely exceeding eight and never eleven ounces—he is red breasted, and is in the northern states a summer bird of passage; coming early in the spring, sometimes before the snow is off the ground, laying, rearing his young, and going off when

the winter sets in to the rice fields, and warm wet swamps of Georgia and the Carolinas. The bird called in the eastern states the partridge, and every where southward and westward of New Jersey the pheasant, is, in reality, a grouse—the ruffed or tipped grouse—*Tetrao umbellus*—a feather-legged, pine-haunting, mountain-loving bird, found in every state, I believe, of the Union, in the Canadas, and even up to Labrador. There are many other grouse in North America, of which none are found in the states except the *pinnated grouse*, or prairie fowl, formerly found in great abundance in Long Island, New Jersey, and the northeastern parts of Pennsylvania; though on Long Island it is now quite extinct, and nearly so in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. They are still killed on Martha's Vineyard, a little island off the coast of Massachusetts, where they are now very rigorously preserved; and in Ohio, Illinois, and all the western states, they literally swarm, on the prairies. The *spruce grouse*, a small and very rare kind, is found in Maine occasionally, and in a portion of New York, between the head waters of the Hudson and the Canada frontier. Four or five other species are found in Labrador, and on the Rocky Mountains, but none of these, though well known to the ornithologist, can be included in the sportman's list of game. The partridge of Virginia is the quail of New York; commonly known as *perdix Virginiana*—though of late there has been a stiff controversy as to his name and genus. It is proved, I believe, beyond cavil, that he is not exactly a quail, nor a partridge either, but a sort of half-way link between them; the modern naturalists call him an *ortyx*—a very silly name, by the way! since it is only the Greek for quail; to which he is in truth the more nearly connected. His habits are far more like those of the quail than of the partridge, and he should be called quail in the vernacular. If you want to get at the

merits of this case, I will lend you a book, written by my old friend, J. Cypress, Jr., and edited by Frank Forester, in which you will find the controversy I have mentioned. These three birds we shall kill to-morrow, and you will be convinced of the truth of what I tell you. Properly speaking, there is no rabbit in America—the small gray fellow, who is commonly so called, sits in a form, and never burrows, nor does he live in congregations—while the large fellow, who is found only in the eastern states, and some parts of New York and New Jersey, turns white in winter, and is in fact a variety of the Alpine Hare. The first, I dare say, we may kill to-morrow, certainly not the latter. The snipe, moreover, which is called *English*, to distinguish him from all the thousand varieties of sandpipers, shore birds, and plovers, which are called *bay snipe*, indiscriminately, and from the woodcock, which the country folks call *mud snipe*, *blind snipe*, and *big-headed snipe*, just as their fancy prompts, is not—so say the ornithologists,—exactly the same bird as his English brother; although his habits, cry, feeding ground, and so forth, are exactly similar; except, by-the-by, that here he perches on trees sometimes.”

“Heavens and earth, what a whopper!” interrupted Heneage.

“Just so I told Sam Bradhurst when he told me so ten years ago, and ten days afterward I saw it myself, in company with Mike Sanford. Bill Roff, of New-ark, knows it right well, and has seen them do so himself, and so does Frank!”

“You be hanged!” answered Fred.

“You think so now,” Harry, “but you’ll know better one of these days. Meantime I have about finished my yarn. All I have got to say more is, that the only birds I have found precisely similar here and in England are the mallard and duck—the teal, which is called here the green-winged, in opposition to our

garganey, which these folks call the blue-winged teal. And now, ring the bell, and fill up a fresh glass of punch." So said so done; and, ere the tumbler was replenished, Tim made his entry.

"Now, Tim," said Archer, "we shall want breakfast before day break—say half past five o'clock. Do you drink tea or coffee, Fred—oh, either—very well, then black tea, Timothy—dry toast—no hot meat—that cold quail pie will do. The double wagon, with Lucifer and Pluto, at six precisely—we shall want Dick to bring the nags home, and you to go with us. Some luncheon in the game bag—the flasks all filled. I will shoot over Sancho and Jem Crow and Shot to-morrow—do you understand?"

"Ay, ay! sur," answered Tim, and exit.

"And now, Fred, this is your bed-room—all's right, I fancy—you shall be called at five to-morrow, and please the pigs, I'll let you know, and that before sunset, that a day's tramping in the swamps of Warwick is quite another thing from our friend Lee's 'Day in the Woods.'" 18

CHAPTER II.

COCK-SHOOTING.

THE skies were yet quite dark, when Frederic Heneage was aroused from the deep slumber into which, wearied with his long drive of the previous day, he had fallen the very moment his head touched the pillow, by the entrance of Tim bearing a mug of hot water, and a lighted candle.

“Please to get oop, sur”—he exclaimed, as he opened the door, “’t clock’s strucken faive, an’ Measter’s amaiست dressed enoo!”

“All right Tim”—answered Heneage, thrusting his arms into the sleeves of a rich brocaded dressing gown, and jumping out of bed without a moment’s hesitation.

“I will be with him, in a quarter of an hour; what sort of morning is it?”

“A varry naice un,” replied Tim.—“T’ frost’s giving laike a little noo, and when ’t soon’s oop, it will be warm and pleasant.”

No more words passed, Heneage proceeding to shave and make his ablutions with all an Englishman’s fastidious nicety in such matters, and Timothy retiring, on hospitable cares intent. Within the quarter of an hour, however, for which he had stipulated, Heneage made his appearance in the breakfast parlor, fully equipped in shooting jacket, fustian trousers, and stout ancle shoes, and found the table covered and Harry waiting for him, the least in the world impatiently.

“Well, Fred”—he cried, as his friend came in—“we have no time to lose, breakfast is ready. So sit down, and remember that you have got a hard day’s

work before you.—But what the deuce!—is this?—Have you too, of all men, got into the Frenchified style of dandy trousers for shooting in, instead of honest old corduroys and boots or leggins? Well, you will suffer for it, I can tell you, before the day's out—we shall be knee deep twenty times in mud and water, before noon, and it has frozen sharp enough, I promise you, to make the water as cold almost as ice—you had better take off those confounded things, and put on a pair of my knee breeches and long boots—Tim will get you them in a minute.”

“Oh! no—never mind, Harry—I shall do very well—there is no milk sop about me.”

“Nor about me, I rather fancy; and yet last autumn I got such a fit of bronchitis after shooting a week with the commodore at Vernon in ice water, with ancle boots and leather leggins, that I had a near squeak for my life; and made up my mind never to shoot again in autumn without long boots, and them as nearly waterproof as good workmanship and Hawker's dressing will make them—But you must do as you will.”

“I will try these to-day”—replied Heneage—“nobody dreams of shooting now a days in England except in trousers. It is too deuced troublesome buttoning boots and leggins.”

“Quite true, Fred—it is troublesome—and in an English turnip field or stubble—say even in a preserved wood with trimly cut rides to walk in dryshod, with no thorns or briars to annoy you, trousers are just as good. On the moors they are better, for they are loose and confine the muscles somewhat less, though for that matter well made breeches do not bind at all—But you will soon find here, between the wet and boggy nature of the woodlands, and the infernal thorns and cat-briars which render the brakes almost impenetrable, that some more substantial protection for the shins is needed, than a mere fustian trouser leg, even if you

laugh at wet feet; which, by the way, you cannot long do in America with impunity."

"We will see—Harry—we will see.—In the meantime, give me another cup of the Bohea—and a corner of that pie, what is it made of?—it looks very good!"

"It is very good—it is I think the best pie in the world, a fat rump steak at the bottom, a dozen hen quails, a score of hard boiled eggs, and a handful of red pepper pods. It is an invention jointly claimed by myself and Frank Forester. The pepper pods were his idea—and a great improvement they are too.—But holloa! there comes Dick with the drag, and the dogs. He is before his time a few minutes; put the blankets on them, Dick," he added, opening the window and speaking to the lad, "and drive them round the ring, we will be ready in five or ten minutes. Ring the bell, Heneage, there's a good fellow; I want to speak to Timothy."

A moment had not passed before Timothy made his appearance, no longer rigged in his neat plain livery coat, but wearing a long round-jacket of black velveteen, with stout breeches and leggins of Yorkshire cord, and a large game bag slung across his shoulders.

"Tim," said his master, "go and tell Mrs. Deighton, that we will dine at six o'clock, and ask her what she means to feed us on."

"I can tell that without axing 't cook," responded Tim. "She's boon to have venison soup, and 't big perch Tom Draw sent us oop, barbecued, and a roast leg of mutton, and boiled partridges."

"*Boiled* partridges!"—Heneage interrupted him—*Boiled!* Good Lord! is it possible that you have turned heathen, Harry; or has Tim taken 'his morning' a thought too strong?"

"Neither—Fred—neither!—They are the best things you ever tasted, larded and boiled with cellery sauce."

"Partridges?—exclaimed Heneage—Partridges?"

“Yes, partridges—that is, partridges as they call them here—but in reality, as I told you last night, *ruffed grouse!*”

“Worse and worse, by heavens!—Boiled Grouse—Hear it not, shade of Colonel Thornton—Hear is not, Captain Ross, or my lord Kennedy—you who did whilom admit this recreant to your society—Hear not the excess of his villainy—By all the gods! Boiled Grouse!”

“We will not discuss them now, Fred—but if you do not discuss them, and that too with much gusto, when we come in at six o’clock—I will plead guilty to any possible enormity!—well, what else, Timothy?”

“Roast woodcock, cheese, caviar, and red herrings!”

“Bravo, Mrs. Deighton!”—replied Harry—“and what have *you* got to take along with us for luncheon?”

“Ay ’se gotten ’t cauld toong ’at was maade ready ’t iast night, and was na coot, and bre-ad and bootter, and ’t twa quart wicker bottle full o ’t breawn Sherry.”

“Well—and the guns are in the wagon, are they? and lots of powder and shot; caps and cards?”

“Ay! ay! Sur.”

“Well then, bring in our box coats, and my buckskin mittens—and we’ll be off at once.”

In a minute or two they were snugly muffled up, both of them, Fred Heneage in a pilot jacket, and boat cloak, and Harry in a huge boxcoat with a dozen capes; for the morning was still sharp and cold, although the first rays of the sun were beginning to steal up the sky from behind the eastern mountain, and Archer well knew that to begin shooting with cold hands and a shivering body was just the way to ensure a bad day’s sport.

They went out into the little hall, and there Harry mounted a head piece made of felt sitting close to the scull, with a strong projecting peak not much unlike an

English huntsman's velvet cap; and as he saw Heneage putting on a neat London built castor, he cried out—

“No! no—Fred—that will never do—if you will not allow me to clothe your nether man, you must at least permit me to *tile* you. Why bless your heart, that natty *Jupp* of yours would be knocked out of all manner of shape, into a cocked hat as they say here, in five minutes, besides that you could not make your way through the first dingle in it. Here, Tim, fetch my other cap hither!—It hangs at the wardrobe end, next the window—There”—he continued, as Timothy made his appearance with the rough weather-beaten scullcap—“Put that on, my boy, and the deuce take the beauty of it!”

“Well, if I must—I must”—answered Fred, eying it somewhat suspiciously—“but it's a queer go!”

“Never mind—never mind. Jump up; in front with me”—answered Harry, who had already taken the reins in his hand, and was standing beside the fore wheel of his trim shooting wagon.

That was the very model of a dogcart, embodying all the excellences and conveniences of an English sporting drag, with the combined strength and lightness of the Jersey wagon. In front it had the high dash board—the raised seat—sufficiently raised to drive four horses from it handily—and the handsome lamps of a mail-phaëton, while behind it had a long close box body, with a seat for the servants at the back, large enough to contain four dogs and baggage for a month's journey. The whole was bedecked with fine bearskins lined with Brussels carpeting, and made at the same time, as warm and as handsome as a Russian sledge. Under these skins the dogs were stowed already, and Dick had taken his seat behind, while Timothy stood to the near horse's head until the gentlemen were in their places, then touching his hat with a gnostical “All right”—he jumped into his

place, and, Harry uttering a low whistle, the gay nags started off at a light trot, and soon brought them to the highroad.

“You have a sweet pair of cobs here, Harry”—said Heneage, “are they fast? That black horse on the nigh side has the very cleverest action I ever saw”—

“What Pluto?—no cleverer than Lucifer’s I think—they step exactly together—No! they are not fast—I don’t care about fast horses; it is no fun to me to drive a brute that hauls your arms out of the sockets at the rate of a mile in two minutes and a few seconds more or less.”

“But I don’t know what you mean,” answered Fred; “we are going along at a spanking pace now—twelve miles an hour at least—don’t you call that fast?”

“Not here, Fred—not here!—nothing is counted fast that cannot go a mile within three minutes. It is to extreme speed in *trotting*, far more than to endurance or maintenance of pace, that the attention of American trainers has been directed; which is the more remarkable, that in their *racing*, bottom is the point particularly aimed at, somewhat to the sacrifice of speed. The great ambition of young men about town is to possess a pair of horses, or a single nag, that can give the go by to every thing on the avenues, and go at a rate which it would bother a thoroughbred to beat on his gallop, for a mile or two.—For a long journey, these crack trotters are apt to be little worth—though there are, of course, brilliant exceptions—and almost invariably they are cross made and ungainly; bearing upon their bits, and keeping a dead pull, that is really painful to the driver.—My team here, for I have four of them—the chesnut, you sat behind yesterday, and his match are my leaders—is what would be thought extraordinary at home—for I can drive it handily twelve miles within the hour, or twenty-four in two, for that matter!—without one of the four breaking his trot

and that without the whip—yet no one in this country thinks anything about them, except to wonder why ‘that Mister Archer, who spends such a heap of money on his horses, shouldn’t have one raal trotter out of the hull lot.’ Some such comments as these, are made on my stud every day, by the farmers. But look here—what do you think of this for cock-ground?” and, as he spoke, he pulled up at a little wooden bridge, which crossed a small brook, a nameless tributary of the Wawayanda creek, which lay about half a mile to the right at the farther side of the broad valley.

To the left of the bridge, looking up the brook, there was a long stripe of low thick covert, near half a mile in length, with a clump of dark pines at the farther end, and about an acre of dry thorny brake around them. To the right hand, following the downward course of the little stream as it swept off to join the river, was a continuous range of tall and moderately open woodlands, with a wide tract of boggy meadows interposed between them and the road, the fields interspersed with thickets of thorn, willow, and cedar bushes, and cut up by wide wet drains, lined with rows of sallows.

“What do you think of that for cock-ground?”—he repeated, waving his hand in a semicircle round him—“there are miles upon miles, in that direction, of ground almost unexplored; and, I cannot doubt it, almost as good as that on which I am taking you to-day. Come jump out—jump out! there we commence operations.”

Timothy, meantime, had pulled out the guns in their woollen cases, handed them with their appurtenances to their owners, and was busily employed slinging his game bags, and a couple of supernumerary shot belts, across his sturdy shoulders, and hunting up his trusty blackthorn cudgel, among the buffalo robes, which filled the box of the carriage.

“Mun ay tak ’t looncheon alang, Measter Archer?”—he inquired—“or will ’t dram bottles be enough, ’till we coom back to ’t wagon?”

“Oh! the dram bottles certainly—where’s mine?—what have you put in it? Farintosh hey?—wel’ that’s right; and Mister Heneage has got”—

“Pineapple rum! Harry—Timothy and I had a private confabulation on the subject, and I made, as I supposed you wished, my own selection.”

“Of course—of course, Fred—now, Dick, you know where Aunt Nelly lives—by the third bridge down this brook? Very well. Wait for us there—they will let you put the horses up in the stable—you have brought oats along?—Exactly! feed them—but leave the wagon under the big oak tree there by the brook side; for I don’t wish to go into the house—do you understand me?”

“Yes, sir”—replied the lad, with a grin of intelligence.

“Away with you then!”—said Archer, “and drive steadily; for they are rather fresh this morning.”

“And, Dick, lad”—added Timothy—“after thou’st gotten doone sorting ’t horses—build up a spoonk o’ fire by ’t ro-ad saide; and get ’t cloth spread, and ’t looncheon ready i’ good stayle—and maind ’at them Goshen chaps doosn’t eat it oop; as they did ’t last taim e i’ soommer cock-shooting!”

“No—did they—did they, Harry?—By George! that is too good.”

“You would not have thought it so very good, I fancy, if you had been as thirsty as we were; and had found the cool champagne all gone. But never mind that now—for we must go to work. We will cross the fence here, and walk up to the far end of the brake, and drive it down. We shall kill twenty birds here; I have no doubt. Come in to heel, good dogs!”

And, at his words, the three staunch and well broke

setters came to his heel, and followed with grave composure.

“Heneage”—said Harry—“I want you to notice and make friends with Jem Crow, the black dog there, for I mean him to hunt with you to-day. I will order him over to you, as soon as we get into covert, and if you will keep a good look to him, for the first half hour, and rate him, if he tries to steal away, he will work for you very well.—Now we will go in—be ready, for there will be a cock jumping up in a moment. It is cruelly thick for the first few yards, but after that it gets opener.”

As he spoke they turned into the thicket, which was indeed at first exceedingly thick-set with alder bushes, and very rotten and unstable under foot—but in a moment they were through this, and stood on the opener and firmer ground within.

“Now Fred”—said Harry, “go on till you come to a straight-cut ditch; jump over it, and keep close down its farther shore.—This place is so narrow here, that we can drive it all down at once; but as it gets wider I will bear over toward you, and you shall take the outer edge, and we will come round the meadow side afterward.”

“Ay! ay! Harry!”—and he went on his way briskly; but ere he had gone ten paces, the three dogs all lying at a charge by Archer’s feet, a woodcock sprung up out of a tuft of winter green, literally under his feet, and flew very fast with its sharp whistle in a straight line before him, rising up into the tree tops. Heneage was taken by surprise and startled, for the moment; but he recovered before the bird had flown ten yards, covered him handsomely, and knocked him over, completely riddled with the shot. Not one of the dogs stirred.

“Load your gun quick—that was done very neatly—Fred—call the black dog, as soon as you are ready,



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“*My Shooting Box.*”

and he will go to you, and retrieve the bird. Look at it, and you will see that I told you the truth—he is at least one third smaller than our English bird, and red-breasted.”

“Yes! by the Lord, and he began to sing as he got up”—replied Fred. “You did not tell me that Yankee woodcocks were in the habit of whistling before!—Ready now!—Here Jem!—Jem!—seek dead, good dog.”

The fine black setter raised himself partially up on his fore legs, and lifted his intelligent and speaking eyes to his master, as if to inquire, whether this stranger’s order was to be heeded; and then, as Harry waved his hand with the words, “to him, Jem; go to him!”—he dashed away, through the brush-wood, and in a minute was standing, in a beautiful position, on the dead bird.

“Is he at point, Fred?”

“Yes!”

“Tell him to ‘Fetch’ then.”

“But suppose it is a fresh bird?”

“If it is, he will hold his point—the devil could not make him flush one, after he has stood it! Bid him ‘Fetch’—you are losing time.”

Exhorted thus, Fred Heneage did as he was bid; and the black dog moved onward warily, snuffing the tainted herbage, and in a moment picked up the bird, and began mouthing it very gently, as he set off to carry it to Archer.

“Here, Jem!—fetch it here! Jem!”—cried Heneage; but the dog seemed marvellously disinclined to surrender his prize to any one but his proper owner; nor would he do so till Harry rated him pretty sharply; after which he resigned himself, appearing to understand perfectly what he was required to do; and all the rest of the day he hunted very steadily before Heneage, though keeping an eye all the time to the

movements of the other dogs, and backing them as often as they pointed.

“Hold up—now hold up! Lads—whe-e-e-ew!”—And, with a shrill and tremulous whistle, Archer waved the brace of red Irish setters, Sancho and Shot, which were still lying at his feet, to the right hand and left. Away they darted, with the speed of light, in different directions, crashing and rattling through the dense brushwood; but, at the first sharp single whistle of their master, they turned instantly, and crossed each other, breaking their ground and beating at regular angles with beautiful precision. They had not beat thus far, before seeing Sancho slacken his gallop into a long steady trot, and raise his head high, snuffing the air, and feathering his stern eagerly, Harry cried out—

“Look to! look to, Fred—there are birds here!”

The next moment, Shot, who appeared to understand the meaning of his companion’s motions as readily as his master did, and who was drawing cautiously up toward him—turned his head around quite suddenly, and stood stiff as a marble statue upon a bird, which he had nearly passed. Almost at the same instant Sancho came to a dead point, upon the bird which he had winded; both standing within a circumference of ten paces, though on two several woodcocks.

“Come up—come up, Fred!” holloed Archer, poising his gun and holding his thumb on the cock of the right-hand barrel, and his finger on the trigger—“come up, quick—here are a couple of cock—toho! Shot—steady—Sir, toho!—Do you hear, Fred?”

“Yes! yes!—but Jem Crow is making game here!”

“Never mind that, unless he is at point—whistle him off, and come this way.”

“Ay! ay!”

And, in a moment, he leaped the narrow drain, and came forward quickly, the black dog cantering along

behind him, until he saw the others at their point. There for a moment he backed them stiff—and then, as Heneage advanced, he crawled along upon his belly, as warily as if he was treading upon eggs, till he was now within six feet of Sancho, when snuffing the hot scent of the game, he too stood firm and steady—the three dogs now forming nearly the points of an equilateral triangle—each in full view of the other, and not exhibiting the slightest proof of jealousy or over eagerness.

“Steady now—Fred”—said Archer coolly—“these birds will rise, it is ten to one, very awkwardly—for they are in the very middle of the dogs. Stand where you are, and I will flush them. Never mind me, I want you to get the shots to-day.”

And he stepped up toward Shot, who was rather the nearest of the three to himself, the others standing nigher to Heneage, in such a direction as to drive the bird if possible out toward his friend. But he had judged rightly—for the bird lay extremely hard, being in fact directly under the dog’s nose and seeing him, so that he was in fact afraid to rise.

When Harry was, however, on the point of treading upon him, he flirled up almost in his face and flew off a dozen yards toward Heneage, when he twisted off short to the left again, and made a dozen quick zig-zags among the close saplings, very much in the manner of the English tack snipe, beating round toward Archer’s rear.

Heneage fired his first barrel at him just as he turned, the first time, and missed him clean, the whole of his charge splintering the bushes two feet wide of the bird and nearly a foot above him as he turned. He was endeavoring to follow and cover him for a second shot, when the other bird, flushed by the report, rose before Sancho, giving him what, had he not been embarrassed between the two, would have been a very

fair shot; catching sight of it suddenly he altered his aim and discharged his remaining barrel.

Meantime Archer, perceiving that he had quitted the first bird, which had by this time got a good way off, and was pitching high and wild toward the end of the wood, by which they had entered, raised his gun very coolly. The cock was diving, at the moment he levelled his piece, through an exceedingly thick growth of young saplings which had been laid by the snow and would have almost turned his shot, had he then fired. But his quick eye at once detected an opening in the brake, a few yards in advance, which, although not above six feet in breadth, the bird must cross in a moment.

As his wing glanced against the sky, the trigger was drawn; the gun flashed; a cloud of feathers streaming down wind, and the bird still impelled forward, though quite dead, by the rapidity of his past flight, told how correct had been the accurate although instinctive aim of the keen sportsman.

But all this Archer saw not, for certain, as he drew the trigger, that his bird was killed, he turned short round, cocking his second barrel as he did so, to look after the other cock, at which Heneage had emptied his gun.

As he expected, he was still on the wing, and nearly forty yards off in the tree tops, but as quick as light, he fired a snap shot, and turned him, likewise, over, dead as a herring.

“I was sure you would miss that bird, Fred”—he said almost simultaneously with the report of his gun—“It was ten to one against you, when you tried to change your aim. I believe I have seen a hundred birds missed in precisely the same manner. The first was not your fault, for he dodged just as you pulled upon him.”

“Did *you* kill him?”

“Yes!”

“Where is he, Harry? he must be a long way off.”

“I do not know exactly—for I did not see him fall, I turned so quickly to mark this fellow.”

“How do you know you killed him then?”

“How do I know?—a pretty question, faith!—why I know that he was in range, I saw him fairly and I *know*, I killed him. I can tell you no more. Wherever I can *see* a bird, I can always tell you whether I have killed him, or, if I have missed him, *how* I did so, and generally *why*. Where you shoot with the eye of faith, not seeing but believing, it is a different matter! Now I am ready, Heneage!—You can bag that last bird for me as you go on—beat straight forward as you are doing, and try to mark whatever birds you do not kill.—I will go and find that fellow, and then overtake you.”

He whistled his dogs after him, as he ceased speaking, and walked away rapidly in the direction of his first bird, but long before he had got half way to the spot where it had fallen, he heard the full round reports of his friend's Purday, both barrels fired in quick succession—the next moment the warning shout of “Mark! mark cock! mark, Harry!”—reached his ear—he turned short about, and, as he did so, he just caught a glimpse of the bird in question darting over his head, and not ten feet above it.—With the speed of thought, he again wheeled round, and again only in time to catch one glimpse of his wing, as he alighted in a little tuft of fern within fifteen paces. Both dogs had seen him and both now stood firm. Two steps, and the cock got up quite silently, and was stealing off down wind when the whole charge overtook him, and keeled him over, on the margin of the boggy streamlet. He was bagged in a moment; but more than a quarter of an hour was consumed, ere he could find the first bird, and when he did at last retrieve him it was almost by

accident; for he had been caught in the forked branches of a dogwood bush, as he fell; and it was only the peculiar manner in which Sancho snuffed the air, and reared up once or twice on his hind legs, that directed his master's attention to the place, where his bird hung suspended felon-like by the neck, in middle air.

Meantime, three single shots and two double from the right hand side of the covert, assured him that Heneage had found game, whether he could deal with it or no; and Harry stepped out joyously to overtake him; but ere he did so, two more shots resounded, and half a minute after each, a woodcock crossed him to the left—the first was in fair distance, and he bagged him—the second was quite out of range, and him he marked down by the meadow edge. When he came up, Heneage was standing in a willow brake, up to his knees in mud, perspiring profusely, with his face and hands very much scratched and torn, and swearing like a trooper.

“What is the matter, Fred? what the deuce ails you?”

The answer was another violent outbreak of swearing.—“Who the devil!” he said—“ever could shoot in such a cursed hole as this—the deuce a feather can I touch!”

“How many have you killed?”

“None!”

“None?”—exclaimed Harry—“that *is* bad—why you must have fired—let me see, three double and five single shots since I left you—have you really killed none at all?”

“None to speak of”—replied Heneage a little sulkily—“only four birds, out of eleven shots!”

“Where are the others—those that you missed.”

“I don't know—they went off there away, to the left hand.”—“I can find them, then,” said Archer—“and now, never fear, you shall get birds enough.

Come back here—there is a fine fresh spring under this oak—take a good horn of rum and water, and make it pretty stiff—you had better; and wash your hands and face; and rest till you get your breath.—It is not so bad after all—we have got eight birds in a little over half an hour—and we shall get all the rest.”

The drinks were duly received and imbibed; and Fred recovered his breath, and his temper; and the friends were soon afoot again, and ready to proceed.

“Bear out now to the left, till you are quite clear of the brake and in the open meadow—Fred”—Harry cried to him, “walk a few yards ahead of me, and look out *you*, for all that cross you! I will not fire at any but those which go inward. Are you outside yet?”

“Ay! ay! Harry.”

“Then move on! Toho! here is a dead point—By the big cedar, Fred—I will flush him to you—Toho! Shot—mark—mark—there he goes!”

He crossed out, instantly, as he rose; and flew along the woodedge right before Heneage’s face, and he dropped him cleverly—within ten yards another cock was sprung, driven into the open, and bagged by Fred in the same manner. Then Archer killed a clever double shot in the brake as they flew inward, and, after he had gathered those, missed one in a very boggy thicket, sinking over his knees just as he pulled the trigger, and shooting six feet over him; but the bird pitched outward, and Fred Heneage cut him down a quick snap shot, just as he was turning in again. “Wiped my eye cleverly, Fred”—said Harry—“but I believe you will have to come, and give me a hand; for I am bogged here hard and fast—and have my doubts, if I can get out by myself. Here it goes! yes! I can—that will do; by George!—here’s another point, look to—mark! mark! a couple!”

This time Fred killed a double shot, and Harry

a moment after a single bird, which flew like the others outward, but Heneage was loading, and Harry knew it.

By this time they had reached the point of the swamp; and accordingly they turned back, up the opposite side of the streamlet, picking up at every few yards the scattered birds which they had driven across, and some which had been feeding on the fresh ground.

When they were about half way up the covert, Harry, who was still on the outside, called out to him—"Look to, now—all the three dogs are drawing; I fancy it must be a bevy of quail running—toho!—they are all stiff now! Fred, where are you?"

"Here!"—and, as he spoke, a prodigious rushing followed. The dogs were pointing at a thick stripe of tussocky bog grass, and out of that, with a vast rush and flutter, a fine cock ruffed grouse rose, and flew across the trees to the inside of the covert.—Harry of course fired at him, for he was his shot; but Fred, who was fluttered by the row he made, fired, unluckily, at the same moment. The bird fell dead enough, and so far all was well; and the next moment a second fluttered out and crossed the open meadow, and that Fred likewise dropped; but a third and fourth followed, directly after the second, while Fred was loading, and Harry unable to get a shot at them for the thicket. Just as the latter had dropped his butt to load, a fifth bird rose; which went down to his rapidly recovered shot, and at the report, a sixth and seventh went off rapidly; Archer covering them as they did so with his empty gun.

"There!" he said—as the last birds got off—"In all the years that I have shot, I never saw ruffed grouse lie like that before—we have got three but we ought to have had four, if you, Master Fred, had not fired at my bird!"

"*Confiteor*—I plead guilty," answered Heneage—but shall we not follow them?"

“No! it were of no use! they fly like devils, and take to the tree, for the most part, so that you cannot find them. We will go on to the end—we shall find three or four more cock yet.”

And they did go on, and flushed five; whereof they killed two, Heneage missing a third, and the others getting up wild and going off without being shot at.

“We shall get them as we go down again,” said Harry, “and then we will have some luncheon.”

Two of these they got up, and bagged; but the third they could not find, though they beat for him far and near; and they had given him up, and were already out of the brake, and half way across the meadow toward the oak tree, under the shade of which they could see a bright fire blazing, and the table cloth spread on the mossy turf, when Timothy, who had left them some time before, hailed them from the road-side.

“Look to yon boonch o’ brackens there anenst you—that last cock lit in ’em.”

And almost as he spoke, with a quick flip flap—the bird rose and flew directly over Archer’s head back to the alder gully. Heneage fired at it when it was not ten yards from the muzzle of his gun; but down it came, over and over, ’till it was within two feet of the ground—then strange to say it rallied and flapped heavily along, both the friends watching it, as if it was on the point of falling every moment, ’till it was thirty yards off at the least, then gathering strength suddenly, it whirled up over the tree tops and away—when Harry pitched up his gun, and riddled it completely.

“Fetch him, good dog Shot”—exclaimed Harry—“But hang me if I understand that—but we shall see directly.”

The dog brought in the bird, and lo! the truth was apparent in a moment. Heneage’s shot, going like a ball, had cut the bill clear off close to the head of the

bird without ruffling a feather else. And but for Harry's shot he would have got off to die by inches of starvation.

"I am glad I killed him, poor devil"—said Archer—"Well, we have done pretty well.—That is twenty seven woodcock, and three ruffed grouse we have bagged—and it is scarce eleven o'clock yet—but we breakfasted so early that I for one am hungry.—So now for the cold tongue, and the sherris sack!"

"I am all for that too. What shall we do after luncheon?"

"Bag twenty or twenty-five more cock and find five or six beves of quail.—How many of them we shall kill depends almost entirely on circumstances—Take the caps off your gun and lay it down—now for the cold tongue, and Master Timothy.

CHAPTER III.

A NEW APPEARANCE OF AN OLD FRIEND, 'LIKE A BULL-DOG.'

THERE was a green nook by the road-side, close to the wooden bridge over the small brooklet down which Archer and his friend had been shooting. In this nook hard by the fence grew a huge oak tree, overshadowing the better part of an acre of ground, with a crystal spring bubbling up from among its tortuous roots, and welling away silently through the greener grass which bordered its course, and falling into the rivulet, just where it rippled out from the arch of the rustic bridge.

Under this canopy of the oak, not a leaf of which had yet changed its hue under the influence of the early frosts, a snow-white cloth was spread upon the grass, its four corners carefully secured to the ground by the weight of as many smooth gray pebbles collected from the bed of the little stream. Upon this cloth were displayed in tempting array, a cold buffalo tongue, a loaf of fresh homemade bread, a dozen pats of golden hued Orange county butter in a stone cooler, and a plate of crisp hot anchovy toast. A set of travelling castors, a couple of silver plates with knives, silver forks, clean napkins, and two capacious wine glasses completed the array; a small canteen of Russia leather, from which this neat service had been drawn, stood open by the spring, in the bright basin of which a bottle of pale sherry was set to cool; and a bright fire of dry hickory wood was glancing on the green at the other side of the tree.

Ay'se varry glad thou'st coom, sur"—exclaimed Timothy, as his master and Heneage approached, and

set down their guns, having first duly removed the caps, against the oak tree.—“Ay was amaist afear’d ’at you were gane to be ahint taime! For t’ anchovy toast is joost ready, and ’t wad ha’ been spoiled cle-an, an you’d tarried a bit langer.”

“It would have been your own fault, if it had, Tim, for you did not tell me you were a going to make any; but since you have, and we are all in time, so much the better,” said his master—“I could not think why the deuce you had lighted a fire.”

“Whay ay thoot ay’d joost make t’ dogs a soop o’ gruel, laike. Sae ay borrowed ’t auld airn pot frae Aunt Nelly, and boiled twa hanfulls o’ t’ oaten meal wi’ a little salt for ’em. And then ay bethoot me o’ t’ anchovies. Measter Heneage laiked ’em weel, ay remember lang syne.”

“So I did, Tim,” said Heneage, laughing, “and so I do now, Tim. How the deuce though come you to remember that?”

“What ails me ’at ay suld forget ’t?—Measter Archer never forgets ought, not he.”

“And so you think that you are bound to be like master, like man, in all things? Hey?”

“Nay! nay! ay’se not sooch an a fule as that, by a varry deal, Measter Heneage.—But, coom, coom, gentlemen, t’ toast is getting cauld, when all’s said and de-an.”

Exhorted thus, they wasted no more time; and in truth in those short winter days time was a precious commodity; and accordingly as they sat down, Harry Archer pulled out his gold stop watch, and looking at it, said,

“Just eleven, Fred, by Jove!—I can allow you only a short half hour. For we have nearly four miles more to go, and our best ground to beat yet.”

“I am content, Harry,” answered Heneage, sedulously masticating a slice of the crisp toast: “Devilish

good anchovy this—a glass of sherry, if you please Tim.”

“Well, Master Fred,” said Harry, sipping his glass of the pale high flavored dry wine, “what have you got to say for yourself now, anent your absurdities of last night?—You have killed two birds of our Yankee game already. Or three kinds if you please, in two birds. Look at this fellow,” he continued, pulling out the ruffed grouse from his pocket. “This is the partridge of New York and New England; the pheasant of New Jersey, and the South. Do you think he looks very much like an English pheasant with his green neck, flame-colored breast, and long barred tail?”

“Not very like a whale! Harry,” answered Fred, trying to laugh, but bothered a little, notwithstanding.

“Quite as much like a whale as like a pheasant. Look at his legs feathered to the ankle, and this long tippet, whence he derives his name. In the breeding season he sets this up like a ruff, and spreads his tail like a turkey cock, and makes a drumming noise, that you can hear half a mile off, and—but I suppose you don’t believe that?”

“Oh! yes I do”—said Heneage, quickly. Oh, dear, yes!”—“And do you believe that woodcock here—”

“Yes! yes! Good Heaven! yes, I believe everything! everything that you like to say!”

“You have become very credulous all of a sudden,” said Harry, looking at him keenly.

“Of course I have. Do not I know that if I shall presume to doubt any yarn, the most fearful that it may please you to concoct, I shall be seized, and dragged before the world like a bull-dog.”

“Like a what?”—exclaimed Harry.

“G—d! I wad na laike to seize a bull-dog, let alore dragging him afore ’t warld!”—said Timothy, who

was looking on, and drinking with eager ears every word that fell from their lips.

“Like a bull-dog, to be sure *à la* Hargreaves!” replied Fred, delighted to change the subject, in the first place, and not ill pleased, in the second, to put Archer in the hole for a minute.

“Hargreaves!” said Harry still at fault, “I don’t take in the least.”

“Is it possible, that you have not heard of the Weatherbit and Old England controversy, at the last Derby?”

“Oh! yes of course, what was I thinking about,” Harry answered; “but I don’t recollect any thing about a bull-dog,” he added, after a moment’s reflection.

“The devil you don’t”—shouted Fred—“How any man, that read it, could possibly forget it, I cannot conceive. I heard it, and it very nearly killed me. My sides were sore with laughing six weeks afterward.”

“But what was it?—Good Lord! tell me.—D—n you, now, don’t begin laughing;” he continued, as Heneage flung himself back on the grass in convulsions.

“Why hang it! how strange that you don’t remember,” replied Fred, as soon as he could recover himself. “I tell you I saw Hargreaves leap up on the chair, in Tattersall’s, immediately that Gulley left it, and exclaim, pale with rage and almost stuttering with fury, ‘that he thought it exceedingly hard he should be seized and dragged before the world like a bull-dog, by Mr. Gulley.’”

“Measter Goolley”—exclaimed Tim, “ay’se a warrant him, he’s t’ varyy man to seize a bull-dog; if ’t’s to be de-an at all—or any oother varmint. I kened Measter Goolley brawly, ay seed him faight Gregson, yance. It’s lang syne—but he did ’t laike—”

“Like a bull-dog of course”—interrupted Heneage. “But to resume; at every second sentence, he introduced ‘seized like a bull-dog!’ ‘dragged in, like a bull-dog!’ ’till at last, I could stand it no longer, but shouted ‘go it! go it, like a bull-dog!’—I wish you could have heard the roar; grave as the subject was, it lasted full five minutes, since that time, I do every thing ‘like a bull-dog!’”

“Excellent! excellent! Fred,” cried Archer, laughing furiously. “I shall do every thing ‘like a bull-dog,’ too. The word must be introduced and rendered current. But come, come, we must lose no more time. Take another glass of sherry, and let us be off.”

But they were not destined to get under way quite so quickly, for just as they were about to rise from their seats, the hard gallop of a horse was heard, coming across the grass field behind them, and before they had time to turn their heads, a superb chesnut thoroughbred with a bang tail, came flying over the fence not ten yards distant from their table cloth, with a loud and cheery whoop of its rider.

“That must be Frank, or the devil!” exclaimed Harry, as he looked up from the glass which he was filling—“nobody else would come tearing over fences in that fashion—”

“‘Like a bull-dog!’”—interrupted Fred—“But it is he, sure enough. How are you, old fellow?”

“And what the deuce brought you here to-day? We did not look for you before Friday at the earliest.”

“Why, look you here, old fellow,” answered Forester, “when I found that Master Fred had come up to give the birds a turn, which you have promised all the season to save for me, I thought that, if I did not come and look after them myself, I should be minus at the end of the week. So I packed up my trunk, and sent it by the Erie railroad. Saddled Bright Selim, and went on board the Highlander with

him, last night at five o'clock—slept at Newburgh, and galloped over hither with my gun slung upon my shoulder, in shooting toggery as you see me. I only stopped to ask Tom Draw to dine with you to-day—which I found you had ordered already—took my bitters with him, would not stay for breakfast, and am as hungry as—”

“A bull-dog!” interrupted Heneage again, whereat Timothy, who thought the repetition very funny, burst into a furious laugh.

“I don't see the fun of everything being like a bull-dog!”

“Everything *is* like a bull-dog, Frank”—said Harry.

“Is it? I am agreeable”—said Forester, who had seated himself by the table cloth, which the others had deserted, and had already finished four large slices of tongue, two pounds of bread, and half a pint of sherry—“some more tongue, Timothy, and another glass of wine—“very agreeable I am—and I dare say everything *is* like a bull-dog; but I can't see why, for my part.”

“'Specially Massa Hargreave! Frank”—said Archer, in a ludicrous nigger tone; and as soon as he spoke Forester, who never missed anything absurd, remembered the point.

“Oh! yes! yes!” he replied—“was not that good. I suppose he will be called Bull-dog Hargreaves always now!”

“It is a great pity he had not lived in the time of Cromwell that he might have been called at full length ‘Seized-and-dragged-before-the-world-like-a-bull-dog Hargreaves.’—That is a thoroughly puritanic and very euphonious name”—said Heneage.

“Oh d—n Hargreaves! come along”—said Harry, who was getting tired of this, and had taken up his gun.

“I'm perfectly agreeable” said Forester, emptying

the last drop of sherry—"so, d—n Hargreaves!—Have you the least objection, Fred?"

"Not the slightest"—answered Heneage—"except that I think he has d—ned himself enough in all conscience."

"Weh! God bless Measter Goolley any ways"—interposed Tim—"He desarves 't, joost for dragging oot t' bull-dog."

"Well said, Tim!" cried Harry Archer, "and now, look here! pack up the traps and direct Dick to the end of the crab tree swamp. Hang all those birds up smoothly by the loops in the game-bag, put it into the wagon, and then follow us down the woodside."

"Like a bull-dog!"

CHAPTER IV.

AFTER LUNCHEON.

WELL, lads, and what have you done this morning, in the way of sport?" asked Forester, as they walked across the grass field, toward the covert.

"Twenty-two cock, and three ruffed grouse," answered Archer.

"By George! that is good work. How long have you been at it? How did Fred manage them?"

"Since eight o'clock"—said Harry—"and devilish well, I assure you; to answer both your questions in a breath.—Fred has shot better than ever I saw a new one, in this country."

"No, no, Harry"—answered Heneage—"I tailored them very badly for a while."

"I cannot call that *tailoring*"—said Archer—"Henry Toler himself could not kill *every* bird in that brake; and when that is said, it is as much as saying that an ordinarily good shot would do well to kill half—and, to tell you the truth, I did not expect to see you kill one in five; seeing that this is your first day. But, after that bad bit, you shot like a workman. If you improve in proportion, you will give both Frank and myself a tug to beat you next season."

"Who is Henry Toler?"—asked Fred Heneage.

"The best shot in America!" said Frank Forester.

"And I think, that means in the world," added Harry quietly.

"The devil you do?" asked Heneage—"Do you think the best shots here can beat our best shots at home?"

"I think they can beat our best shots *here*, at American game and in American covert.—The latter, as you know already, is harder than English covert; and, if we find quail, as I think we shall, in the crab-tree swamp, you will make acquaintance with the hardest bird to kill, that flies on earth."

"Indeed?"

"Yes! indeed."

"Did you ever shoot with Henry Toler? can he beat you?"

"No. Yes."

"Did you ever see him shoot?"

"Once—Pigeon from the trap. He *would* shoot No. 8 shot, which is three sizes too small, and they figged all his birds.—In spite of that, he killed every bird. But they fell out of bounds, and he was beaten."

"Did you ever see him shoot game?"

"Never, Mr. Cross Examiner."

"How then do you know that he can beat you?"

"Because I have shot with half a dozen men, whom I can barely beat, or whom I cannot beat, and they all admit that Henry is their master, not their match."

"That is a reason;—Is he a good fellow?"

"Wait, 'till you meet him, with your knees under my mahogany."

"I am answered."

"As how?"—asked Frank Forester.

"Because Harry must be marvellously changed, if any but good fellows put their knees under his mahogany."

"He *is* marvellously changed then—don't you know that Lord George says the only reason he and I, and Tom Hutchinson, and Howe, and Bill Porter, like one another, is because we are such a set of d—d disagreeable beasts!—But halloa! look at that—the dogs are all standing."

"By George! so they are. It is quail too! They

are basking in the bog grass by the fence side, and will lie like stones.”

The ground, which they had now gained and which was Harry's chosen spot of spots, was a long range of boggy meadows, skirting the streamlet down which they had been shooting all the forenoon, intersected here and there with drains, and interspersed with lines of willows, thick thorny brakes all overrun with cat briars, and clumps of evergreen cedar. The margin of the brook was lined on the hither side by a broad verge of thick alder coppice, and on the farther by a wide tract of wet and swampy woodland.

At a little distance from the stream the ground became firm and the soil dry, and here among the tussocks—the long grass of which, even in the heaviest storms, bears the snow up from the ground, forming long galleries under which the quail live unharmed upon the seeds and berries that have fallen from above—beviae are in almost all seasons very abundant.

In this dry meadow land, where not a bush was to be seen, within a hundred yards, the three dogs were standing, as stiff as graven images.

The black dog, which had found the birds, was close upon them. His nose was pointed directly downward—his head cocked knowingly on one side—his full hazel eye, glaring with that peculiar expression, which tells how hotly the maddening scent is streaming up into the sensitive nostrils of the sagacious brute—his lip covered with slaver, so eager was his excitement—his hind leg lifted, and his fine silky flag erect, and stiff as it were carved in iron.

The red setter Sancho, who stood next, and but a short space behind him, caught but a little of the hot steam which so wondrously excited his companion; to a sportman's eye his attitude told everything.

He had approached as nearly as he dared, and with his whole body stretched out to the utmost, his snake-

like neck elongated, his eye fixed, and his nostrils audibly snuffing up the tainted air, he stood rigid as his mate, but not erect as he—for the deep soft fringe of his belly was within an inch or two of the withered herbage; his fore leg was bent; and his red stern, with its snow white tag, stretched out nearly into one line with head, neck, and body, which all seemed to be drawn forth to their utmost length, as if to near the game as much as possible without moving forward.

The third dog, the liver and white spotted setter, was backing thirty yards at least from the other two, having been quartering his ground toward them, when they came on their point.

“How do you know that they are quail, Harry?”—enquired Heneage, as they stepped hastily forward to the tuft of higher grass by which the dogs were standing.

“By the nature of the ground, Fred. It is too dry to hold cock there!—and partly by the attitude and action of the dogs. I can generally guess very correctly what bird is going to get up, where I can see the dogs fully. These little chaps are close under Jem Crow’s nose, and Sancho has a snuff of them too.—They will lie, as I said before, like stones; and though they offer a very easy shot in the open, they make such a flutter and hubbub as they get up, and they get up so closely, that I would bet ten to one you do not kill a double shot, be as cool as you may. It requires more practice to get used to them, than to any bird I know.”

By this time, they had come up to the very place where the dogs were standing; and Frank, at a gesture of Harry’s which he well understood, stepped forward a few paces to the right, in order, if possible, to head the birds off from the thorny covert on the banks of the rivulet.

“Now, Fred, look out,” said Archer, “I will flush them,” and with the words he walked forward a little

way, the black dog still keeping his point, and the red setter backing him, steady and true as steel.

So hard did the birds lie, that Archer was actually abreast of Jem Crow's nose, yet not a quail had risen.

Turning his head, he waved Heneage forward, and as he came up, uttered a low whistle.

Jem pricked his ears, and the silky hair bristled a little on his back, but he would not stir.

The red dog crawled up on his belly, until his nose was parallel with that of his companion, and then stood immovable.

Meanwhile the liver and white setter Chance, stole up at a slow and guarded trot, as if he were treading upon eggs, until he also struck the scent, a little way behind the others, when he came to a full point also, though less resolutely than the two leaders.

“Whe-ew! Hold up good lads!—Hold up!”

And thus exhorted, but most reluctantly and gingerly, all the three crawled about two paces forward—and again stood dead—and no words could induce them to advance another foot.

“Is not that pretty, Heneage?”—said Archer—“What can be steadier than that? Now I will flush them”—and, suiting the action to the word, he stepped up briskly to the dog's noses, trampling the long grass noisily down under his heavy boots—

Whir- Whir-r-r-r-r! Impeding one another, for an instant, crossing, and fluttering their wings with rapid and tumultuous haste, a large and well-grown bevy rose under his very feet; and, as is not unfrequently the case, dividing into two squads, wheeled to the right and left, one to the coppice across Forester's face, the other and larger division to the open meadow before Heneage.

Well warned as he was, and confident of his coolness, Heneage discharged his first barrel missing handsomely before the farthest bird was ten paces from him;

and even Archer, cool old hand as he was, half raised his gun with a tremulous and uncertain hand to his shoulder.—It was but a momentary impulse, however, and he looked steadily on until Heneage fired his second shot, killing the old cock of the bevy neatly at twenty yards—then choosing two birds in the act of crossing, he cocked his gun, as he raised it, pulling his trigger as it reached his shoulder; and then, before the two birds, for the charge cut down both, had reached the ground, easing the but a trifle, cocked and discharged his remaining barrel, knocking a third bird over at long distance.

Then, dropping the but of his piece to the ground, he raised his hand to shade his eyes from the strong sunlight, and cried, “mark—mark them, Fred; they will all drop in the open meadow, where we can get every bird.—There”—he continued, “three are down by that bunch of rushes—and—that is it, I have them!—the whole lot on this side of the drain by the willow hedge. Now, Frank, what have you done?”

“Knocked down a brace, though one, I fear, is only wing-tipped—and marked five or six down into the thorns beside the blighted cedar.”

“Hold a moment, then, till I have loaded. If I am not mistaken, there is another quail left here under Jem’s nose—he seems to be pointing, though he is down to charge!”

And in fact when you looked closely at the face of the sagacious brute, as he lay close, where, with his fellows, he had couched instant, without waiting orders, at the reports above his head, it was evident that his master had not miscalculated his intelligent meaning.

His eye was still set—his brow knotted into a rigid frown—his nostril wide distended.

“Are you ready, Fred?”

“Ready.”

“Do not move. I will flush him to you. Do you kill him, I will not fire.”

And leaning a little forward he brushed the long bog grass with the muzzle of his gun, when up jumped the bird, and crossing Heneage was covered deliberately, and killed neatly.

“That will do—there are no more left here. Now, Frank, whistle Jem Crow to you.—Go to him, sirrah, go!—He will soon find your birds.”

“I have got the first,” answered Forester.—“Here Jem, Jem Crow—good dog”—and with much less reluctance than he had shown before in joining Heneage, the handsome black setter trotted away obedient to a voice, which he knew second to his master’s only.

Within a few moments Chance and Sancho had found the five birds, which had gone down to Heneage and Archer; and just as they were bagging the last, they heard Forester cry, “Ha! dead—Jem, dead! have a care!—Fetch him!”

“That is well”—exclaimed Harry—“seven birds for the first rise.—We shall get the whole of this bevy.—Upon my word! you are shooting very well, Heneage!”

“Coming a little into it, old fellow.—But which way now?”

“I want you, Frank”—shouted Archer, “a council of war! Halloa! what the deuce can be bringing Tim across the meadow at this rate?—Gad! how he twitches his short fins over the tussocks. I am afraid something is the matter! What is it, Tim?”

“Please, sur,” responded Timothy, stopping short at the hail, “you did na tell me what’s to be dean wi’ Measter Forester’s horse. T’ boy canna maind him, and draive horses doon to t’ crab-tree swamp at yance!”

“Lord bless me, I did forget. Well! you must ride him down the road, and leave him with the boy and come in at the lower end to join us.”

“Varry well, sur”—responded Tim, and vanished, running back even faster than he came, unwilling to lose a minute’s sport.

“Now Frank,” said Harry—“what is to be done? We ought according to all rule to hunt up those birds in the coppice first, for it is ten to one that we shall not find those which dropped in the open meadow if we go to beat for them now.”

“Not find them!” exclaimed Heneage in astonishment—“Not find them! why I can go within half a yard of the spot where they dropped.”

“I don’t care, if you can go within half an inch, you can’t find them, if you go now.”

“You need not stare, Fred”—said Frank Forester, “this is one of his cranks—he believes, or affects to believe, that quail can retain their scent at pleasure.”

“And do you?” asked Heneage, in some wonder.

“Not I, indeed! not one word of it.”

“Well, never mind” said Archer, somewhat impatiently, “we have no time to talk about that now. On the other hand—the thorns are in our regular line of beat, and to come back here will lose half an hour—We have got to beat that corner at all events, for there will be from six to ten woodcock along those willows.”

“Oh! let us go to them, first,” said Heneage, “what do you say, Frank?”

“In course, I say so. I will bet two to one we find the birds directly.”

“In what, Frank?”

“In what you will!”

“Ponies?”

“If you please.”

“Done!”

And, without another word, throwing his dogs off to the right and left, waving his hand and encouraging them with his cheery whistle, away strode Harry, in

the middle, toward the rushes into which the first three birds had been marked.

"There they lie, close to that tuft. Some of them not a yard asunder"—said Heneage to Forester.

"Well, you will see the dogs point them directly."

But it was no such thing. For scarcely had he spoken, before Jem Crow and Sancho, meeting from opposite directions, quartered the very spot, both dogs passing within six feet of the rush clump, at a long gallop, their heads erect, whipping their flanks with their feathery sterns, but without evincing the slightest consciousness of game, and without moving a bird.

Archer looked round to them, with a smile and a wink.

"That is the very place"—said Heneage.

"No, no!" said Forester, "it cannot be.—Is it so, Archer?"

"Yes! to a yard!—But I want to prove this fact to you.—I will call in the dogs, and get them down to it, and make them hunt it out, inch by inch!"

And he did so; and the three dogs worked the spot over and over, at his bidding, snuffing, as it seemed, every blade of grass, but moving nothing.

Ten minutes were perhaps spent thus, in vain; and they moved forward to the drain, Harry saying—

"Now you shall see. Nine birds went down by this drain, and we shall not find them any more than the other three."

Nor did they. But as they neared the drain, along which several willows grew rank and luxuriant, the thick grass broke off, unable to grow beneath the shade, into large isolated tussocks, and beyond them the soil was bare and very moist, with here and there a few water flags and large colt-foot leaves.

"We shall find cock here, lads"—said Harry—
"Jump over the fence, Frank, or they will dodge us."

They paused to give him time to do as he was

directed, and, while they were standing still, in order to do so, the red dog, coming up rapidly, took a flying leap over one of the single tussocks, the very last one, and instantly came on a dead point in the open ground, with his head toward the fence, and his stern toward the tussock he had just crossed.

“Toho! where are you, Frank? There is a cock before him in the fence, close to the low willow, the third from the crimson maple. Do you hear?”

“Aye! aye!”

“Then look to!”—and as he spoke, he walked forward with Heneage to the point.

Just as they came up to the tussock, however, over which Sancho had leaped so cleverly, and within a foot of its base, Heneage trod on a tuft of short grass, and close to his toe—Whir-r! up jumped a quail.

It took him so completely by surprise that he blazed away too quickly, and missed it; but Harry cut it down, before it had flown ten yards farther.

“That was a quail, not a cock!” shouted Forester, behind the willows, having heard the rush of his wing, and distinguished it from the flip flap of a timber-doodle. “I told you we should find them!”

“He did not point this—Heneage trod it up. He is on his point still.—Be quiet.”

As soon as they had reloaded, and while Jem Crow was retrieving the dead bird, Archer said to his friend in a low voice—“Did you see that?”

“Yes! the dog’s fore feet literally grazed the tuft in which the bird lay, as he jumped the tussock.”

“Precisely—yet he did not scent or stand him.”

“And *did—does* stand—for you see he has not moved—a woodcock, which is a bird of far weaker, and more watery scent than the quail. Will you believe, when you have seen?”

“It does look queer, I confess!—See, Jem has got the bird.”

“Bring him hither, good dog. It is a young cock! you can distinguish the males by their white chaps, the cheeks of the females are reddish yellow. Now, Frank, are you ready?—I will flush him! Hie cock! cock! Purrh!”

Flip-flip-flap! the bird rose in the thicket.

Bang! and a stream of feathers which drifted down wind, over the willow-tops, told them that Forester had done his duty.

“Mark! mark! Fred, to your right! there goes another. Cleverly done.—That was a good shot”—he added, as Heneage cut him down just as he twisted in toward the fence.

“Come over again, Frank, the dogs are making game, toward the meadow edge.”

And Forester obeyed, and, out of the long grass, where they had seen the quail alight, near the drain edge, they killed seven cock over dead points.

One bird, the last at which they fired, was hit very hard, but flew nearly half a mile, before they marked him down near a single cedar in the open ground.

“By the way,” said Archer, “there is a little spring and a boggy place yonder, I should not wonder if we find two or three more long bills there. Do you remember, Frank, we killed nine there last autumn, on a frosty morning late in the season?”

“To be sure I do”—said Frank, “it is a prime place for them to feed.”

And they bagged four there accordingly, the crippled bird, and three fresh ones; and just as they were about to turn, the liver and white dog ran in upon a small bevy of eleven quail, and flushed them out of distance; for which he got a sound thrashing.

“Mark them, Frank!”

“I have marked them, they are down in the thorns near to the six I marked in, before. But pretty lads

you are, to mark! these are the birds, which you swore dropped yonder—when in fact all of them came on, except that single fellow, which you killed.

Whew-y, whew-y, whew-y. The small and plaintive chirrup of a running bevy, came down the wind as he spoke, from the very rushes in which they had scarce half an hour before, knocked up and killed eight woodcock.

“Do you hear that? do you hear that?” cried Harry exultingly. “Now they have moved—now the dogs will find them at once! Come on—come on!”

And, wending their way hastily back, they had scarce reached the drain and the willows, before all the three dogs stood at once, on three different birds; and, to be short, they found and bagged the eight quail, which they had seen alight, out of the self same bogs, among which three men and as many first-rate dogs had been plunging and threshing about, for the better part of an hour, so short a time before.

“I will not ask you to believe,” said Harry, “unless we find the first three by that single rush clump.”

They did find them, and killed two, Archer missing the third with his second barrel.

“Now do you believe that quail can retain their scent?”

“Yes.—It is proved,” said Fred Heneage.

“No—I don’t,” said Frank Forester.

“Of course not,” said Archer—“If either you, or Lord George Gordon, were ever, on a single occasion, to give in, after putting forth an opinion, I should turn Millerite, and believe that the world is coming to an end next April!”

“But how do you explain it, Harry?” said Heneage. “can it be instinct?”

“We will talk about that after dinner. Now let us follow up those be vies, and then find another.”

Those be vies they did follow up, and nearly finish

up, moreover; for out of eighteen birds which they had seen into the thorns, they bagged thirteen—one more killed which they could not find, and four getting off, one missed, and three not shot at.

As they went down the swamp, they found two more bevia; but they flew at once into impracticable cover, dark pines over head, and swamp rhododendrons below, and they rendered a bad account of these, bringing to book only eight, out of the two bevia.

To make up for this bad luck, however, they came on a little plump of woodduck floating on a small lilled pool of black transparent water enveloped in the thickest covert, and shot four of them; beside bagging ten more woodcock, and a brace of ruffed grouse.

The sun was nearly setting, when they emerged from the crab-tree swamp, and found Tim and the horses quietly awaiting their arrival.

A cool spring was at hand, and the flasks of Farintosh and Jamaica were in demand instantly; then they told up their game, and found the whole day's bag—most glorious bag indeed—to consist of no less than forty-three woodcock, thirty-six quail, five ruffed grouse, and two couple of woodduck.

“Now then” said Harry, when the flasks were exhausted, and the game-bag filled to repletion, “now then, jump in as sharply as you please. For if we don't look out, we shall be late for dinner and get cursed grievously by old Tom Draw, who was never backward in his life, at coming forward”

CHAPTER V.

A VERY FAIR WOMAN; AND A VERY FAT MAN.

“GET away lads!” sang out Harry, as he sprang to his box, lapping his whip up knowingly as he did so. Frank Forester had ensconced himself already in the back seat beside Timothy, who was employed in drawing the bearskins, which the coming frost rendered very acceptable, about their knees. Heneage sat in front at Archer’s left hand, with the stout fur-lined apron covering his lap. The dogs crouched at their feet, easy and warm, on the soft sheepskin rugs.

“Get away lads!”—and away they went, at the word, untouched by the whip, at full twelve miles the hour, their ears laid back upon their necks, now nibbling at each other playfully, now snatching at the long steel bits, ’till the bright curb chains rang and jingled; while the well-made smooth running wagon followed them almost noiseless over the limestone road.

Dick followed on ‘Bright Selim’ at a slashing gallop—no slower pace of the thoroughbred would keep way with the spanking trot of the chesnut geldings.

There is no lovelier scenery on earth, than that through which the homeward road of the sportsmen lay, along the northern slope of the Warwick mountain; with a mile’s breadth of soft velvet meadows stretching out green and gentle to the left, the bright waters of the Wawayanda, flashing in golden reaches to the level sunbeams far on their northern verge, and beyond the stream a long range of many-colored woodlands, half veiled by the purple haze of autumn, and the blue summits of Mount Adam and Mount Eve soaring, dis-

tinct in their dark azure, against the cloudless sky of autumn.

On the right, rose the mountain side continuous, ridge above ridge of leafy knolls with misty hollows intervening, until, a mile or more aloof, it terminated in a crest of gray and splintered crags, on which the westering rays dwelt lovingly.

Along the slope of this romantic chain the narrow country road ran sinuous; now diving into some fairy glen, through which a nameless rill trickled over its many-colored pebbles; between blocks of granite over-run with wild vines, and trunks of still verdant oaks; now climbing some bold hillock whence the view reached for miles and miles over the verdant campaign to the faint line of the Shawangunk hills, darkling against the bright horizon.

As the wagon mounted the brow of one of these little hillocks, a female figure turned into the road, from a by-path, perhaps a hundred yards in advance, mounted on a beautiful black horse with a long tail and mane; and cantered along gently, without looking back, or appearing to notice their approach, in the same direction as they were proceeding.

As soon as he observed the presence of the fair equestrian on the road, Harry gathered his horses up a little, and held them well in hand, in order to avoid alarming her by coming up too quickly in her rear.

It was evident at a single glance that she was a lady; for though she was riding all alone, there was that in her whole dress and air, as she sat her spirited horse, which distinguished her at once from the ordinary country lasses, in their large sun bonnets and calico skirts.

She wore on her head a neat beaver hat, with a long veil of brown barége floating over her left shoulder, and was dressed in an admirably fitting habit of rifle green broad cloth, the long close waist, tight sleeves, and

ample skirts of which set off the exquisite proportions of her round slender waist, her broad falling shoulders, and the full contour of her form, as they came up behind her.

That which struck Heneage the most forcibly, however, was the easy grace with which she managed her horse, evidently inclined somewhat to be skittish, the firm squareness of her seat, and the lightness of hand, with which she by turns humoured and controlled his mouth.

Taking it for granted, from the unconcern which Archer manifested at this fair apparition, that he must know who she was, Heneage was on the point of enquiring, when suddenly a large brindled mastiff sprang out, from the yard in front of a cottage, with an outburst of fierce and savage baying, and dashed full at the head of the black horse.

Terrified at this fierce assault the fiery black wheeled round so violently, as would have unseated any less skilful equestrian, and yerked out his heels spitefully at the dog.

Then catching sight on a sudden of Harry's wagon, the approach of which he had not heard, he reared bolt upright, pawing the air with his fore feet, so that it seemed as if he were in danger of falling backward.

But with unusual fearlessness and presence of mind the fair rider slacked her rein, and laid the ivory handled riding whip, which she carried, repeatedly and sharply on his flanks.

With a great bound he alighted on his forefeet, and again lashed out his heels viciously, and would have reared again—but Heneage, who had instinctively freed his legs from the bear-skin-apron at the first attack of the mastiff, leaped out of the wagon, almost before Harry had pulled up his horses, and had the black firmly by the head, in less time than it has taken to describe it.

Two or three fruitless struggles he made, snorting

and panting, between fright and anger; but the young man humoured him so judiciously, while he held him with a grasp like that of an iron vice, and spoke to him so gently, and in horse-language so intelligible, that he was mastered in a moment.

“Oh! Mr. Archer,” said the girl, “how can I ever thank your friend enough; I believe he has saved my life, for I am sure I must have fallen, if he had reared once more.”

“Oh! dear no, you would not, Miss D’Arcey”—replied Archer, taking off his hat, “I never saw any one sit a horse so well in my life; and I flatter myself, I am a judge, you know. But Fred has always been a lucky dog, and this is the greatest *coup* of all! allow me to present Mr. Frederick Heneage”—he added—“Miss Maria D’Arcey.”

As he looked up to bow, Fred Heneage saw her face for the first time; and much as he had been led to expect from the grace and symmetry of her person, and from the exquisite melody of her low silver voice, all that he had expected fell far short of the reality.

A fair high forehead, pure and transparent as white alabaster, eyebrows and lashes black as night, fringing eyes of the brightest and most laughing azure, a little nose slightly *retroussée*, lending both glee and archness to the bright rich face, lips red as the dove carnation, a clear fair complexion with a warm rosy flush dawning through it, and a profusion of soft sunny nut-brown hair, falling down in a flood of mazy ringlets, on either side her face, quite to the shoulders.

Such is a bare description of the features, which met the ardent gaze of Heneage, as he raised his head, and uncovering his curly light brown locks bowed gracefully and lowly.

But no words will describe the light of intelligence and soul which informed those fair features—the mingled expression of artless mirthfulness, and deep sensi-

tive thought, which rendered that fair young face so wondrous beautiful and dazzling.

There was something in Heneage's eye, as it met hers, that made her blush slightly for a moment; and seeing her confusion, he was in turn somewhat embarrassed, and, for once in his life at fault for words; when Harry relieved them both, by begging her to take a seat in his phaeton, and allow one of his men to ride her unruly horse homeward.

"I will engage to set you down at your own door in five minutes," he added—"pray let me have that pleasure."

"What! dismount like a recreant and own myself conquered," she replied laughing. "Oh fie! Mr. Archer, I fear you are but a false knight, after all, giving me counsel, which were I to follow, you would despise me utterly—counsel, which you know to be wrong! If I were to dismount now, Daisy would never let me get upon his back again—naughty Daisy," she added, patting the arched neck of the black, which having recovered now from its affright, bridled and whinnied conscious of her voice. "Besides, if mamma were to hear of this suddenly, she would never let me ride out alone again; and then good bye to all my dear romance!—no! no! I will gallop Daisy home, and whip him for his impudence well, too"—she added. "The only kindness you can do me farther, is to let Timothy—how do you do Timothy?—I forgot you before—drive away that horrid dog.—Look at him, he is waiting to fly at me again."

"Jump out, Tim; jump out, man; and knock that brute on the head, with a big stone.—Oh! Mr. Reed," he went on, as the owner of the dog came out of the cottage, "It is too bad your keeping such a savage beast, as that, unchained."

"Well—yes—he is some savage"—drawled out the man, in a careless tone—"Cesar, git in doors, you!"

“Some savage. hey?” said Harry, half laughing, half indignant—“I should think he was. Here he was all but the cause of Miss D’Arcey being thrown from her horse, and perhaps killed just now.”

“Well—I did see that he skeart the hoss some.” He made answer.

“Well—you shall see something else too, Mr. Reed—you shall see that I will shoot him the very next time I come up the road, if he flies out—”

“No! no! you will do nothing of the sort,” said the girl laughing, “unless you want to quarrel with me. I will have no ill feeling between you and Mr. Reed. There is no harm done; and he will keep his dog fastened up in future. He would have been quite as sorry as yourself, Mr. Archer,” she added with a sly glance, “if I had been hurt.”

“Well, he should ha’ been tied up; that ’are ar’ a fact”—responded the man, about one degree less sulky than his dog, yet moved, in his own despite, by the witchery of her manner.

“All is right then,” she said, laughing again, “and I will say good night, with many, many thanks”—she added, looking toward Heneage. “By the by, if your friend had not helped me so nicely, I don’t believe I should have spoken to you, Mr. Archer; you have behaved very badly. It is above a month since you have been to see me—but I am afraid, I must forgive you now. Good night!”

And with the word, she turned her horse’s head back to the road, put him into a canter, and gradually increased his pace, plying him pretty smartly with the whip, ’till he was almost at full speed. At about a quarter of a mile’s distance, she turned off into a cross road, and was lost to sight.

“How beautifully she rides! what a lovely girl! who is she, Frank; who is she?”

“She is the second daughter of a Colonel D’Arcey,

who died some years ago on the Western Frontier. Her mother, who lives about two miles from 'the Box,' is one of the most delicious old ladies in the world; and a great friend of mine. Maria has an elder sister, a nice girl too in *petite santè*. But look you, Fred, I must not have you falling in love with either of them."

"I am not a very falling-in-love-man," said Fred laughing; "But I cannot see why not. She seems to me a very loveable sort of person; and I can afford to love any body I like, thank God! why not, Frank?"

"Because she has got a brother, a lawyer in York, who is just as unloveable a sort of person, as my fair friend is loveable, and you have no idea yet how loveable she is.—He is as hard, as crabbed, and as narrow-minded a snob, as ever you met withal. He tried hard to hinder me from darkening his mother's doors, within which he is a perfect domestic tyrant, until he discovered, in the first place, that I was not a marrying man, and had no thought of the delicate Julia, or the fair Maria; and, in the second, that he could not quarrel with me, unless by being guilty of impertinence so gross as to earn evil consequences."

"But why—why in the devil's name! is he so vicious?"

"He is naturally a brute in the first place—in the next, he is a bigoted fanatic—in the third, a violent ultra Native American, and hater of all d—d foreigners—and, to conclude, a howling demagogue, who makes vast capital by declaiming against British influence, British tyranny, and British gold. I verily believe, he would rather see his sister married to an American counterfeiter, fresh out of the states' prison, than to an English gentleman of wealth, accomplishment and honor. He is a choice specimen of all the worst points of his countrymen—thank God! a very rare—I hope, a solitary specimen!—But, as I said before, I must have no falling in love, Fred."

“ I don't know,” said Heneage laughing ; “ I never thought of such a thing before ; but now that you have told me all this, it alters the matter very much.—The spice of difficulty, perhaps the spice of danger, flavors the dish of matrimony, marvellous well, men say—I think—I think—I *will* fall in love with her.”

“ There is many a true word spoken in jest ;” said Harry Archer gravely—“ But I would rather give a hundred pounds, than see this jest come true.” Just as he uttered these last words, they reached the top of the hill, on which the gate of the shooting box opened ; and descried, coming up the opposite side of the ascent in his large two horse wagon, the renowned Tom Draw.

His large double seated wagon of a bright green hue picked out with black, was almost entirely concealed in the mass of buffalo hides, among which, occupying almost the whole width of the front seat, the fat man sat sublime.

His horses, full sixteen hands in height, the one a magnificent red roan, the other an iron gray, breasted the steep hill, with arched crests and high round action at full ten miles the hour ; and, as Harry was wont to say, but for the trifling difference in their color, few gentlemen in any country could boast a handsomer or better matched pair, not to say as good travellers, as that of mine host of Warwick.

But the man—the fat man !

A volume would scarce suffice to describe his outward man ; a library would fail to convey a just idea of the excellencies, the oddities, the humors of this most worthy, most original, most happy of characters.

Wrapped in his ample overcoat of drab pilot cloth, with buckskin mittens on his hands, and a huge fur cap on his thick iron-gray locks, beneath which shone out, beaming with mirth, and gayety and genuine good humor, the broad expanse of his ample and handsome

face, Fred Heneage, who had heard of him both from Harry, and Frank Forester, but who had never seen him, thought he had never beheld such a mountain of flesh.

His clear brown eye beamed with unutterable humor, beneath the pent-house of his thick shaggy grizzled eyebrows, giving expression by their well marked line, to a broad and expansive forehead. The nose was small and well-shaped—but the mouth, the mouth, was the great feature of the bold, manly, lion-like face—the mouth, telling a world of character—with its arch dimples, full-fraught with merriment and mischief at the corners—its firm well-cut curve speaking of energy and resolution and a will of iron—and the full, rich-red nether lip betokening a little—yet not a very little either—of voluptuous, perhaps sensual taste.

As he sat in his wagon, perched on the high soft cushion of his easy seat, with all the lower part of his person enveloped in the warm buffalo robes, the effect of his enormous size was in some sort concealed, or at least diminished; inasmuch as the breadth and rotundity were not now contrasted with the want of height; which, when standing, rendered his size more conspicuous.

Still, as he measured the vast breadth of his shoulders, and suffered his eye to fall over the regular protuberance which swelled outward from his chin downward in fair round proportion, Fred looked, inquiringly at Harry, and said,

“Jest apart, do you mean to tell me that huge animal can shoot—can walk?”

“I never saw a better shot—I have rarely walked with a stauncher walker. He is not fast of course, but where the ground is solid, he is unwearied. And without any exception, he is the most thorough and best sportsman I know anywhere.”

“The deuce! How tall is he?”

“About five foot six, and measures round the place

where his waist should be, five foot nine, thus being literally larger round than he is long. His thigh is bigger in girth than my chest, and I am not exactly a baby. He weighs three hundred and forty-two pounds, or in horseman's weight, with which you are of course more familiar than with pounds, twenty-four stone six pounds. And, by Jove! his heart is as large as his whole body. Upon my word! it is no exaggeration to say he is all heart."

"Not a bit of exaggeration," said Frank Forester—"I really *love* Tom."

"He is an extraordinary fellow indeed," said Harry, and I value him very highly, for his sterling and excellent qualities, independent of his social and entertaining disposition and humor. How are you, Tom? How are you?" he exclaimed, as they arrived within hail, exactly opposite to the gate, which Timothy jumped down to open.

"How be you, boys? how be you?" shouted the fat man, in a deep rich joyous tone, which bespoke his hearty and jovial character. "I'm pretty smart, now the cool weather's come. What sport to-day?"

"Very fair, Tom," replied Archer—"very fair, indeed; not quite as much as you and I have done in old times—but very fair as things go now a days; about ninety head, I think in all, and half of them woodcock."

"That's not so slim any ways.—Least ways, not so slim for you boys, when you harn't got old Tom along with you. For you carn't mark quail no how—not one on you, worth a cuss—nor shoot them, nuther. Least ways, Frank carn't, by G—!"

"Well, and whose fault was it, we hadn't old Tom, with us?—Did not I send you wora to come over to breakfast, and bring your cannon, and that brute Dash! you are getting lazy in your old age, or playing possum, you old hippopotamus."

“Hippo—*hell!*” answered the fat man.—“Come, git them little sorrel scrubs o’ yourn out of my way, or I drive over you, torights, and smash you into nauthen. Git on! Forester’s kind o’ dry. His little jaws is sticked together for want o’ mystening—or else he’s so drunk he carn’t speak.—Git on, dew! I want’s a drink myself.—I harn’t dranked only wunst since I left hum.”

“Once? how the deuce did you manage that? where did you get a chance to drink?”

Jem Decker’s asleep up the road yonder, under the big black walnut; and I see a black stun jug by him. I guessed he’d dranked it pretty well down, for he was ’mazin hard and fast I tell you. And I thought if so be he waked up and found any left he’d be doin himself a mischief likely—he’s the G—damnedest critter when he’s drunk—so I jest pulled old Roan up, and got out and hitched! Then I took up the jug and shook it jest to judge like how much there was in, you know.”

“And how much was there, Tom?”

“Only a little mite I tell you—a pint maybe, or a trifle over. Well! when he heard the liquor—chuck, chuck in the jug, like, Jem he stirred, and turned over on his back, and seemed oneasy kind o’—so I made no more work, but jest dranked it up—”

“And left the jug empty, I’ll be bound—you old heathen!” said Forester.

“What! do you think I’d steal?”—replied the fat man, with a mighty show of indignation.—“No, no, I made a fair change with Jem—no one can say I stole it—and what I left instead o’ the old apple Jack ’ill do him a plaguy sight more good, when he wakes and finds his biler jest as hot as h— and hotter.”

“What did you leave instead, hey Tom?”

“First best fish oil!” replied Tom with a monstrou explosion of merriment—“It did smell some, I reckor

—but Jem's not particular, and I doosn't begrudge him the smell no how."

"You give him the smell in!" said Forester, when he could speak for laughing, "well, that was fair any how. Rather above the bargain, hey?"

"Well, I don't know"—said Tom. His apple jack stinked some too. I guess 't warn't the first time there'd been fish oil in the jug—and I warnts a glass of Archer's old Jamaiky to wrench my mouth out. Git on, dew—whip up them scrubs, or I'll be a top on you down the hill.—Git on, boys, dew!"

CHAPTER VI.

A GOOD FEED, DULY DEFENDED!

“Now, Timothy,” exclaimed Harry Archer, as he dismounted from the seat of his wagon at the door, “run in, and see what o’clock it is; and then ask Mrs. Deighton if dinner will be punctual.”

“It’s haaf paast faive, sur,” answered Timothy from the hall, “and t’ dinner ’ll be upon t’ teable at six, and no mistaek!”

“That’s well—for I’m as hungry as a hawk”—said Archer. We shall have just enough time to make ourselves comfortable, Fred. Where the deuce do you mean to stow yourself, Frank?”

“Oh! never fear. I have arranged that with Timothy—I shall take possession of his room to-night.”

“Very well—now lose no time lads; for Mrs. Deighton’s six is sharp six you’ll remember. Look here, Tom, you will find this week’s Spirit here, and the last Turf Register, can you amuse yourself with them, ’till we get fixed, as you’d call it, I suppose?”

“Yes! yes”—answered Tom, “I’ll amuse myself, I promise you; but it won’t be with no sperrit but Jamaiky sperrits—them’s the best sperrits for an arternoon. Come, Timothy, you lazy injun, where are you snoopin’ off to, cuss you? Git me the sperrits and ice water—your master haint got sense to order up no licker.”

“If you have not got sense to order what you want in my house, I am not bound to find you in brains.”

“The rum will find his brains, I’ll warrant it,” said Forester, “for I am certain whatever brains he’s got, are in his belly.”

“Sartain!”—responded Tom—“Sartain they be—that’s why its sich a nice, fat, round one.—No *head* wouldn’t hold *my* brains! a stoopid little know nauthen, like you be, may keep his small mite o’ brains in his head, though it beant no bigger than a nutshell—but it does take a belly, and a good, rousin’, old, biggest kind o’ belly, to hold mine.—And the rum will find them torights, and sharp them up too wust kind, I reckon.”

“You do not make much toilet, Harry, I presume,” asked Fred, as he sauntered away toward his bed-room, after staring at old Tom in a vain attempt to make him out, for half a moment.

“Just as you please about that, Fred. This is liberty-hall. But I do always dress for dinner even when I am quite alone.”

“The deuce you do! That must be a monstrous bore!”

“Have you known Archer so long,” asked Frank Forester, “and not discovered yet that his greatest pleasure in life is boring himself?”

“It’s very well his greatest pleasure in life aren’t in borin’ other people, as you calls it,” interposed Tom, who was growing a little crusty at the non-appearance of the ardent—“Least ways I know whose is—hey? Little wax skin?”

“I do not find it so,” continued Harry, without taking heed of the by-play between Forester and old Draw, who were forever sparring one with the other—“on the contrary! I think life is not worth having if we strip it of the decencies; and, living as I do in the country, three fourths of the year, and more than half the time alone, I find there is much more danger of becoming somewhat slovenly and careless, than of being over nice. When you don’t meet a lady three times in a year, or a man who shaves above twice a week, unless on special occasions, it is easy enough to degen-

erate into a mere boor.—I at least will keep clear of that. Some folks think it manly and knowing to assimilate themselves to the roughest and the rudest of the rough and rude, because they chance to live in remote rural districts, I am not one of them.”

“I don’t think no one will find fault with you for that, no how,” interposed Tom, “no one who knows you. The darned critter’s allus dressed as neat as a new pin. And his dinner table, oh h—l, its just like a jeweller’s shop in Broadway.”

“Yes—and of that more anon—I have been attacked for that too, before now.—But we’ll talk about that, while we are feeding; hey Tom?”

“I’m willin’ so as you aren’t over long a dressin’.”

“Well, here comes the Jamaica for you; and I will not be a quarter of an hour.”

Nor was he; for in a little more than ten minutes he returned, neatly attired in a puce-colored cut-away coat, white waistcoat and black trousers, as natty and well-dressed as possible, but without a shade of foppery—the thing which of all he most abhorred—perceptible either in his exterior or his manner.

A moment afterward Frank Forester made his entree, and as usual his practice was as different from his principle, as anything in nature could be. To judge him from his talk you would have supposed that a red flannel shirt and tow trousers, were his ultimatum and beau ideal in the way of dress, yet forth he came, very fine—to say the truth, a little too fine!—so fine, indeed, that it required all his remarkably good looks and quiet manner, to redeem his attire from the charge of being *kiddy* at least, if not tigerish.

He wore the full dress blue coat of his old corps—the first dragoons—a crack royal regiment, which he had left but a year or two before—with its richly embossed gold buttons, and black velvet cuffs and collar. His shirt was rich with open work and mecklin lace,

and fastened in front by enamelled studs of exquisite workmanship connected by slight chains of Venetian gold. His crimson velvet waistcoat was adorned with garnet buttons, and his trousers of Inkson's most elaborate cut, fitting his shapely leg as if they had been made upon it, displayed his high instep *très bien chaussée* in a black gauze silk stocking, and patent leather pumps.

Tom Draw stared somewhat wildly, at this display, of which he certainly had never seen before even the counterfeit presentment; and, though he was rigged himself in his best swallow-tailed sky-blue, canary colored waistcoat, and gray inexpressibles, he began to think, as he afterward expressed himself, that he had nauthen on him no how, barrin' his skin, and that rather o' the thinnest, and the dirtiest at that.

Scarcely was Frank well established in Harry's best arm-chair, before Fred made his appearance in a plain snuff-colored dress coat, and the rest of his garb quiet, dark, and unpretending.

"Why what's all this about, in the name of wonder?"—he exclaimed, looking at Frank attentively.

"Only a little of the heavy dragoon breaking out, Fred," answered Archer, it does so periodically—like the fever and ague—and like it, thank heaven! it is not catching. If I were to live a thousand years I never should forget the first day I saw my gentleman in this country.—He was walking up Broadway, arm in arm with poor Power who had just landed on his second visit to this country.—They had two of the narrowest pinch up hats—Tom Duncombe's, only *more so!*—stuck in the most jaunty style on the opposite sides of their heads—each had his outer hand, as they swaggered along arm in arm, stuck in the hind pocket of his coat, and the skirt well brought round on the opposite hip—each, to complete the picture, at every second pace, gave the genuine sabretash kick with the outer

leg—unluckily in poor Power's case it was the right leg—but that made no difference in life—and then the toggery! Only conceive Master Frank, in a bright pea-green body coat, with large basket buttons of solid silver—a crimson cachemire neckcloth—elastic tartan pantaloons, a little tighter than his skin, alternate checks, each check two inches square, of black and the brightest azure, and to conclude, more chains and spurs and iron boot heels—more clash and clang, in walking along the street, than there are to be found in a squadron of cuirassiers. By Jove! It was inimitable!”

“What did you do, Harry?”—asked Fred laughing, while Frank tried to grin, though not with the best grace in the world.

“Do? Bolted to be sure! what would you have had me do?—I would not have spoken to him in the street in that rig for any sum! I was not very well known in New York myself at that time, and I saw old Hays on the other side of the street quietly contemplating my friend there, with a cool confidential nod of the head, and wink addressed to his own other eye—as who should have said, ‘Aha! my fine fellow, it will not be many days, before you and I shall be better acquainted!’”

What exclamation or asseveration would have followed can never now be known, for just as Forester stood up, not a little nettled, Timothy threw the door open, and said,

“T' dinner's upon t' teable, please sur.”

And thereupon Frank's face relaxed into a mild and placid smile, and drawing Tom's arm under his own,

“Allow me the honor,” he said, “Mistress Draw, to hand you in to dinner.”

“No you don't, little wax skin—no you don't—not through that door no how, we'd git stuck there, boy,—and they'd niver pull us out; and we'd starve likely with the smell o' the dinner in our noses, and

the champagne a bustin' under our eyes out o' the very bottles to be dranked, and us not there to drink it. No, no, we'll run no resks now."

And with the words they passed into the dining-room, arranged as on the previous evening except that, for two covers, four were now laid on the white damask cloth, and that a pair of tall silver wine-coolers occupied the centre of the table with the long necks of hock and champagne flasks protruding.

At the left of each guest, stood a pint decanter of delicate straw-colored sherry; and at his right, four glasses, a long stalked beaker of old-fashioned Venice crystal, a green German hock glass embossed with grapes and vine leaves, a thin capacious sherry glass with a curled lip so slender that it almost bent as you drank from it, and a slim-shanked shallow goblet for Bourdeaux or Burgundy.

There was but one comestible, however, on the table, a deep silver tureen, with a most savory and game-like odor exuding from the chinks of its rich cover.

"I would have given you some raw natives to begin with," said Harry, "knowing how much Tom likes them, but we can't get the crustaceous bivalves up hither with distinguished success, until the frost sets in."

"I'm right glad on't, by the Eternal!" exclaimed Tom, "nasty, cold, chillin', watery trash! jist blowin' out your innards for no good, afore you git to the grist o' dinner—what kind o' soup's that, Timothy?"

"A soup of my own invention"—answered Harry—"and the best soup in the world *me judice*.—Strong venison soup, made as we make hare soup at home—a good rich stock to begin with, about ten pounds of the lean from the haunch brayed down into the pottage, about a dozen cloves and a pint of port, and to conclude, the scrag of the neck cut into bits two inches square, done brown in a covered stew-pan, and thrown in with a few forced meat balls when the soup is

ready. You can add, if you please, a squeeze of a lemon and a dash of cayenne, which I think improve it. It is piping hot; and not bad I think."

"I have tasted something of the kind in the Highlands, at Blair of Athole," said Frank Forester.

"I have not," replied Harry. "The Scotch venison soup, is made *clear*, and though a capital thing, I like this *purée* better."

"So do I, Harry," said Fred Heneage—"and I should think by the gusto with which you speak of it, that you not only invented, but made it."

"You'd think just about right, then," answered Tom, as he thrust out his plate for a second ladle full. "He and I did make the first bowl of it, as iver was made. And it tuk us a week—yes, a fortnight I guess, before we got it jest right. I will say that for Harry! the darned critter is about as good at bringing game *up* right on the table, as he is at bringing them *down* right in the field."

"Yes! and for that very thing, I have been assailed," said Harry laughing, "as lacking the true spirit of a sportsman, as not enjoying the thing in its high ennobling spirit, as not a pure worshipper in heart and intellectual love of the divine Artemis, but a mere sensualist, and glutton, making my belly a god, and degrading my good gun into a mere tool for the slaves of Epicurus!"

"Treason! high treason! name the rash man! Hold him up bodily to our indignation!"

"First let us drink!—That pale sherry is delicate and very dry. Will you have champagne, Tom?—No—very well—Here is a health then to C. E. of the Buffalo Patriot."

"C. E.!—Who the devil is C. E.?"—cried all three in a breath.

"Alias, J. B."

"And who then is J. B.?"

“The man wot stabbed me in the tenderest part—which he, I suppose, would say is my abdomen.”

“Are you in earnest, Harry?”

“I am gravely in earnest, when I say that he taxed me seriously, though sportively, with all that I have stated.—He said that, in my admiration of good things, in dwelling on the melting richness of a woodduck, or the spicy game flavor of a grouse, in preferring a silver plate whereon to eat my venison to an earthen trencher, in carrying out a bottle of champagne and cooling it in a fresh spring for my luncheon, instead of trusting to execrable rye or apple whiskey, I prove myself degenerate and no true votary of the gentle woodcraft. He is *afraid* that I cannot rough it!”

“Is he, indeed?—Poor devil!”

“He don’t know much then, no how, that chap!” answered Tom, as he went largely into the barbecued perch, which had taken the place of the pottage—“Least ways he don’t know much, if he thinks as a chap can’t rough it because he knows how to eat and drink, when there’s no need of roughing it. I’ve seen fellows as niver had seen nauthen fit to eat nor drink in their lives, turn up their darned nasty noses at a good country dinner in a country tavern, where a raal right down gentleman, as had fed allus on the fat of the land, could dine pleasantly. Give me a raal gentleman, one as sleeps soft, and eats high, and drinks highest kind, to stand roughing it—and more sense to C. E., next time he warnts to teach his grandmother.”

“How do you like this fish?”

“Capital—capital!”

“Well, all its excellence, except that it is firm, lies in the cookery.—It is insipid enough and tasteless, unless barbecued.”

“Then you were wise to barbecue it.”

“And how should I have learned to barbecue it; if I had not thought about such things? No no, boys—I

despise a man very heartily, who cannot dine just as happily upon a bit of salt pork and a biscuit, and perhaps an onion, aye! and enjoy it as well, washed down with a taste of whiskey qualified by the mountain brook—or washed down with a swallow of the brook unqualified—as he would enjoy canvass-back and venison with champagne and Bourdeaux;—who cannot bivouack as blithely and sleep as soundly under the starlit canopy of heaven as under damask hangings—when there is cause for dining upon pork, and for bivouacking. But there is one thing, boys, that I despise a plaguy sight more—and that is a thick-headed fool, who likes salt pork as well as canvass-back and turtle;—who does not see any difference between an ill-cooked dish swimming in rancid butter, and a *chef d'œuvre* of Carême or Ude, rich with its own pure gravy. And yet more than the thick-headed fool, do I abhor the pig-headed fool, who thinks it brave forsooth and manly and heroical withal, and philosophical, to affect a carelessness, which does not belong to him, and to drink cider sperrits when he can drink *Sillery sec* of the first growth! And that being said, open that champagne, Timothy.”

“So much for C. E.?—” inquired Forester.

“No no!” exclaimed Harry, eagerly—“I deny any such sequitur as that, C. E. is a right good fellow—or was, at least when I knew him—It is a weary while ago since he supped with me in New York, the very night before he left it—never I believe to return—at least since then I have never seen him—and many a warm heart has grown cold, and many a brown head gray in the interim. But when I knew C. E. he would never drink bad liquor when he could come by good—and right well did he know the difference—and by the way, while vituperating me for my gourmandize, he shows that he is tarred a little with the same stick. He abuses me for saying that the woodduck is as good a

bird as flies, except the canvass-back, asserting that the blue-winged teal is better."

"Out upon him!" exclaimed Forester—"the blue-winged teal is fishy, nine times out of ten."

"Aye! Frank—but he is speaking of the teal on the great lakes; and I dare say he is right. It is to the fact that he is the only duck seen on the sea board, who eschews salt water and salt sedges that the summer duck—for that is his proper name—owes his pre-eminence over all the other wild fowl of this region.—Now, as the blue-winged teal, or Garganey, is in the same predicament on the lakes, I think it very questionable whether in that country he may not be as good, nay better than my favorite."

"Are you in earnest? Do you think that the diet of ducks makes so much difference in their quality?" asked Heneage.

"So much? It makes *all* the difference.—What renders the canvass-back of the waters of the Chesapeake, the very best bird that flies; while here, in Long Island sound, or on the Jersey shore he is, at the best, but a fourth rate duck?—The wild celery, which he eats there, and which he cannot get here, for his life."

"A roast leg of mutton?—by no means a bad thing, Harry"—said Fred Heneage—"when it is old enough and well roasted."

"This is six years old," answered Archer—"Black faced, Scotch, mountain, of my own importation, my own feeding, and my own killing. It has been hanging three weeks, and, by the way it cuts, I believe it is in prime order—done to a turn I can see that it is. Will you have some?"

"Will a fish swim?—Where is the currant jelly?"

"On the sideboard. I don't consider currant jelly orthodox with mutton, which is by far too good a thing to be obliged to pass itself for what it is not."

“I agree with you,” said Frank—“I hate anything that is like something else.”

“Of course—all good judges do. That puts me in mind of what Washington Irving once told me, that he never ate *clams*, by any chance, because he was quite sure that they would be *oysters* if they could!”

“Excellent! excellent!” said Fred and Forester, both in a voice; whereupon Tom added,

“They can’t come it though—stewed clams is not briled iseters!”

“No more than mosquitoes are lobsters, which was John Randolph’s sole objection to the insects.”

“And do you really prohibit currant jelly with roast mutton?”

“I don’t prohibit anything—but I don’t eat it, and I think it bad taste to do so. Venison I think the only thing that is improved by it. Canvass-back ducks I think it ruins. Nor should I think C. E.’s plum jelly with grouse, one whit better. The sharpness of currant jelly is very suitable to the excessive fat of English park-fed venison; but with any lean meat I think it needless, to say the best. There is but one sauce for any kind of gallinaceous game, when roasted, whether his name be grouse, partridge, pheasant, quail, or wild turkey.”

“Right, Harry, and that is bread sauce.”

“And that is bread sauce; made of the crumb of a very light French roll, stewed in cream and passed through a tamis, one small white onion may be boiled in it, but must be taken out before it is served up to table, a lump of fresh butter as big as a walnut may be added, and a very little black pepper. Let it be thick and hot, and nothing else is needed; unless, indeed, you like a few fried crumbs, done very crisp and brown.”

“Open that other flask of champagne, Timothy—Tom’s glass is empty, and he begins to look angry.

Will you take wine with me?" said Heneage, who had hit Tom's feelings to a hair.

"In course, I will"—replied Tom joyously, "when Harry gits a talking about his darned stews and fixins, he niver recollects that a body will git dry."

"Pass it round, Timothy," said Harry—"that's not a bad move of old Tom's by any means. I believe I was riding one of my hobbies a little hard. But it provokes me to see the good things, which are destroyed in this country by bad cookery; and it provokes me yet worse, to hear hypocrites and fools talk as if it were wrong for the creature to enjoy the good things designed for his use by a good Creator."

"It is about as rational, truly, as to assert that it is impious to plant a tree or cultivate a bed of exotics in order to make finer a view naturally beautiful; because Providence did not plant them originally there."

"Yes! sartain! yes, I go that," said old Tom, who was always death agin humbugs, as he would have said himself—"or wicked to wear breeches becuse natur did not fix them on our hinder eends in the creashun. I do think, too, though I niver hearn of it 'till Archer come up this a-way, and larned us how to eat and drink, as bread sauce doos go jist as nat'rally with roast quails, as breeches on a——"

"Shut up, you old sinner," said Harry, laughing. "Here come the ruffed grouse, larded and boiled, for boiling which Fred so abused me this morning."

"He won't abuse you, when he has once tasted them," said Forester. "It is the best way of cooking them."

"Well—yes—they bees kind o' dry meat, roasted; but then I don't find no great faults with the dryness—specially when one's got jist this wine, to wrench his mouth with arter."

"They *are* good—with this celery sauce especially "

“As is bread sauce to roast, so is celery sauce to boiled game—Q-e-d.”

“There is a *soupçon* of onion in this also, is there not?”

“Just enough to swear by—do you think it too much?”

“I did not say a taste, I said a *soupçon*—are you answered?”

“There aint no Souchong in it no how—nor no Hyson, nother. He’ll be a swearin’ it’s Java coffee next”—said Tom, waxing again somewhat wrothy.

“He is thirsty again,” said Frank—“what shall it be; I say hock after this boiled white meat.”

“Right, Frank, for a thousand!” said Harry, “and after the woodcock, which Tim is bringing in, we’ll broach a flask of Burgundy.—Hock with your white game, Burgundy with your brown! But hold, hold! Timothy, Mr. Draw will not touch that hock—it’s too thin, and cold for his palate.”

“Rot-gut!”—replied Tom—“None o’ your hocks nor your clarets for me—there aint no good things made in France except champagne wine and old Otard brandy.”

“Well, which of the two will you have, Tom?”

“That ’are champagne ’s good enough for the likes of me.”

“Oh! don’t be modest, pray. It will hurt you!”

“What this here wine?—not what I’ve dranked on it, no how—I could drink all of a dozen bottles of it, without its hurtin’ me a mite.”

The woodcock followed, were discussed, and pronounced perfect; they were diluted with a flask of *Nuits Richelieu*, so exquisitely rich and fruity, and of so absolute a bouquet, that even the hostility of fat Tom toward all French wines was drowned in the goblet, thrice the full of which, mantling to the brim, he quaffed in quick succession.

The Stilton cheese, red herring, and caviare, which succeeded, again moved his ire, and were denounced as stinkin' trash fit for no one to eat but a darned greedy Englishman; but the bumper of port again mollified him, and he said that if they ate them cussed nasty things jist to make the wine taste the better for the contrast, he didn't see no sense in that, for it was mazin' nice without no nastiness afore it.

The devilled biscuits he approved mightily, as creating a wholesome drought, which he applied himself to assuage by emptying three bottles of pale sherry to his own cheek, while the three young men were content with one double magnum of Chateau Latour. But when he emptied the third bottle he was as cool and collected as if he had not tasted a single drop, and was half disposed to run rusty, at being summoned into the library to take a cup of coffee and an old cheroot—but here again his wrath was once more assuaged by the curaçao, of which he drank off half a tumbler, and then professed himself ready for a quiet rubber, while Tim was gittin supper.

CHAPTER VII.

THE QUADRUPEDS' QUARTERS.

THERE had been a very heavy shower during the night, but it had cleared off bright and cold before morning broke; and now, as the sun rose cloudless in the pearly and transparent sky, no view can be conceived more beautiful than that which lay before the eyes of Heneage, who had arisen early, and stood gazing over the landscape from the porch of the shooting box.

The summits of the Warwick hills; round-headed, bold and vast, cut sharp and clear, with all their wooded outlines, in dark purple masses against the lucent sky; beneath this massive screen, sparkling with dew, and gay with ten thousand gorgeous hues, the noble woods beyond the little river, concealed the level fields which spread their gentle undulations to the foot of the distant mountains. Nearer yet to the eye, in the middle ground, the wild rocky bank fringed with its feathery junipers, and carpeted with glossy leaved azalia, was veiled by the thin mist, which seethed up, white as snow, from the bed of the rushing torrent, to be dissipated, long ere it reached the upper air, by the increasing power of the sunbeams.

In the foreground the smoothly shaven lawn, as green as an emerald, and almost as bright from the lustre of the quick glancing dew-drops, sloped away gently from the portico to the stream's margin, broken by two or three clumps only of rare exotic rhododendrons, and one large osier basket full of roses of all colors and varieties, with a luxuriant honeysuckle entwined about its handle.

Heneage stood there perhaps ten minutes, looking out with a well pleased eye, and framing to himself, half unconsciously, ideal pictures of some such solitude as this to be his "dwelling place,"

"With one fair spirit for *his* minister,"

while Archer's favorite tortoise-shell cat, which had followed him out of the parlor, was rubbing its glossy sides against his leg, and purring loudly though unnoticed.

While he was still gazing at the little landscape, discovering some new charm every moment, and yet wondering within himself whether Harry did not find it very lonely all by himself there in the winter, a quick firm footstep resounded on the hall floor behind him, and Archer's cheerful voice crying aloud,

"The top of the morning to you, Master Fred. I had no notion that you were such an early man. Why the sun is scarce out of bed yet."

"Oh! yes, in the country I like to be moving early; besides I thought you breakfasted about this time."

"Never, before eight, unless when I am going to make an early start and a long day's shooting. And never at all, when Forester's up here. Timothy tells him all sorts of lies about the time, but it is all to no purpose; the little devil knows instinctively what o'clock it is, even with the window shutters closed, and nothing can induce him to get up in what he calls the night."

"And you classed me as being in the same category, hey?"

"To say the truth, yes! and I half believe this fit of early rising is only accidental. Perhaps the fair Maria's charms have banished 'nature's soft nurse.'"

"You be hanged!—If the truth must be told, it was the infernal racket that your fat friend kicked up, when he was starting, not metaphorically, but literally, in the

night, that aroused me. Where the deuce did he sleep? and what took him away this morning? I thought he was going to stay and shoot with us to day!"

"He slept upon the sofa in the library—he went away to get his gun and Dash, and his shooting tog-gery. How did he rouse you? I did not hear him."

"Roaring like a bull for his *bitters!* what the devil *are* bitters, old fellow?"

"Oh! you will learn that soon, if you cultivate Tom. By the way, what do you think of him?"

"Think!—By the Lord! He is far beyond all thinking about. If he were not alive now, I should be quite certain that Shakspeare must have made Falstaff after him; as it is, I fancy, nature must have made him after Falstaff."

"All but the cowardice, I grant you—but the old dog is pluck to the back-bone."

"How did you make him out?"

"I discovered him—and it is not the act of my life of which I am the least proud. I expect that I shall go down to history, at least, side by side with Colum-bus, Vasco di Gama, and such like worthies, as the dis-coverer of Tom Draw, the great American original."

"He is indeed an original!"

"He is *the* original—the only original I have ever met with in the United States. It is an odd thing, and I cannot account for it, but original and eccentric char-acters appear to me to be the growth of old countries. But come, Tom will be back to breakfast soon, and by that time Frank will be afoot, and bellowing for his breakfast, of which he will eat more than any two people in the room, while swearing all the time that he has no appetite. Do you like to walk round, and look at the stable and the kennels?"

"Of all things. I have been wondering where they are placed; for there is no glimpse to be seen of any out-house."

“This way; I will show you; they are close by though hidden by my trees and trellices.”

The cottage stood, as it has been described, midway the slope of the hill which arose very rapidly behind; with an open grove of tall white oaks and hickories growing close down to the rear of the building, and sweeping off in a long receding curve from either of the angles, to the right hand and left, a few scattered trees only, dotting the lawn and flanking the ends of the cottage.

A few yards only within the thick wood, at each extremity of the house, a tall latticed screen composed of rough gnarled branches, unbarked and fresh from the forest, wound away in irregular lines until it was lost to sight in the aisles of the woodland, covered with ivy and parasitic creepers, such as thrive in the shade.

This rustic fence, which was at least eight feet in height, and covered with perennial verdure, completely effected the concealment of the out-buildings, while it was in its turn so far hidden by the outskirts of the grove, as to give no appearance of regularity or artificial stiffness.

Opening a small doorway in the fence, not far from the gable of the house, Harry led his friend into a narrow gravel walk, which wound for a short distance in and out among the tall trees and then entered a little court, immediately behind the cottage, covered with smooth white gravel, and having in the centre a large tank four or five feet deep by twelve in diameter, full of beautifully clear spring water, which rushed into it continually from a stone spout with a sweet gurgling sound, and passed out again by an aperture below the lip of masonry without ever overflowing it. In this tank there stood half a dozen submerged flower pots containing water lilies of different colors and varieties, their broad glossy leaves floating upon the transparent surface, and affording a grateful shadow to the gold and silver fish

with which it was stocked abundantly. In addition to these finny sparklers, a dozen or two, at least, of beautiful tame summer ducks were dipping and disporting themselves on the clear waters, or preening their feathers on the brink, while on the gravel of the courtyard twenty or thirty little snow-white bantams were strutting about proud of their feathery pantaloons, and as many pink-eyed fan-tailed pigeons were circling amorously, one about the other, making the air vocal with their low plaintive cooing.

When Harry entered the little enclosure, pigeons and summer ducks, and bantam fowls, all came crowding up around him for their share of the handful of peas and corn, with which the pockets of his shooting jacket were provided.

"This is my poultry yard, what do you think of it, and my little pets?—Why, Peter, you impudent little villain," he added, "are you not ashamed of yourself?" as a pretty white pigeon, after circling two or three times about him, fluttered up, and alighted on his shoulder.

"They are very nice, and very pretty," said Fred. "But I must confess that I hate pets.—It is so disagreeable to have them killed and eaten, after you have been playing with them, and coaxing them."

"Killed and eaten!" do you suppose that I am such a Goth? No, Fred, the greatest cruelty I commit to these little folks is to devour the eggs of the bantams, the squabs of the white pigeons before they have emerged from their boxes, and the young of these summer ducks, which, as soon as they are able to take care of themselves, are kept away from the water, and tied in separate coops, in the other yard, upon celery. None of these breeding people are ever destined for the kitchen. In the other court, which is under Mrs. Deighton's especial superintendence, there are never less than a dozen woodduck, and as many capons,

cooped and waxing fat. But thither I never enter in. But come, we are losing time; this is the way to the stables.”

And with the words he opened a second door near the pigeon house, and passed with his friend into a larger court yard, neatly paved with cobble stones, having, like the first, a large tank in the centre continually fed by the same bright streamlet. This court, unlike the other, was surrounded on all sides by buildings, between two of which was an arched gateway, with a large folding porte cochère, and as in the little poultry yard through which they had come on their way, everything was as clean and neat as a lady's drawing-room. There was not a particle of litter or rubbish to be seen; no odoriferous goat was there, no fox chained to his rank kennel, no terrier prowling about, snapping and troublesome, the only quadruped in sight being a large tabby cat, blinking with her half closed eyes, and purring to herself in silent satisfaction, as she lay basking in the full sunshine on the top of the horse block.

Exactly facing them as they entered was a long building consisting of an open carriage house, with an arched colonnade of unbarked cedar posts in front, with a hay loft above it surmounted by a small clock-house with a weather cock and vane—at either end, projecting some twelve feet in advance of the carriage house, was a wing of twenty feet front, with a door five feet wide of stout oak studded with nail heads, and a handsome window. Each of these wings, which were only of a single story, had an open cupola above it with moveable venetian blinds, admitting a free circulation of fresh air.

Toward the right of these wings Archer took his way, and lifting the heavy latch, entered a passage six feet wide by twelve in length, neatly paved, with a large stable lamp swinging from the roof.

To the right of this was the grain room, its window

protected by a wire grating, and all the walls, floor, and interior of the binns lined with sheet iron.

"All snug and tight, Fred," said Harry, as he pointed it out to him—"no rats or mice here! Pretty good oats," he added, taking out a sample. "The best of North Rivers, but they are light as compared with ours at home. These are what they call very heavy here, nine and thirty pounds the bushel."

"The devil! do you call that *heavy*!"

"Yes! Faith! exceeding heavy!—We have none of your fifty pound oats, we don't manure liberally enough for that, but come—here are the prads."

He threw open the second door, and the stable was before them, a square space of twenty feet, with four stalls occupying the whole length of the wall facing them—four stalls handsomely filled by the round powerful quarters and square docks of four as spicy cobs, as ever did their mile in three minutes—two blacks and two bright glossy chesnuts.

Their sheets of clean white holland, their woollen blankets checked with a yellow line, bordered with blue, and with blue initials, their poitreles of the same, and their hoods, knowingly folded back over their gay surcingles, were the perfection of cleanliness and good taste.

The floor paved with bricks set edgewise was actually redolent of cleanliness. The beds were laid down with a neatly plaited border; and over every stall hung an elaborate wreath of straws destined to allure any wandering fly—vain destination, for the deuce a fly was to be seen or heard in that abode of nattiness.

The horses had been fed and littered down, and the venetian blinds were therefore closed, but enough of light penetrated, with the air, through the shutters of the ventilator in the roof to allow all the details to be seen even to the smaller

As they came in one of the black cobs turned his head and whinnied; and at the sound the others rattled their blocks and running halters, and looked with some token or other of recognition, at their master.

"Ah! you rogues, I must not forget you," said Harry, and turning back into the grain room he brought a few bits of carrot, which lay ready to his hand in a barrel, and fed them severally, clapping their smooth and well-groomed necks, with this choicest of equestrian dainties.

"Where is your hay—Harry? you have no loft overhead I see!"

"No! indeed.—The hay is over the carriage house. There is no greater mistake in the world than to put your hay and grain *over* a stable, where all the fétor and ammonia must rise and impregnate the food with insalubrious stench.—No, indeed, nothing but the fresh air above, and a constant change of that. Now then, let us go to the other wing. See, here," he continued, as he entered it, "here is my harness and saddle room, with a furnace and boiler for hot water—and here," passing through the vestibule—six feet, by twelve, like that on the other side, "Here are the boxes for the thoroughbreds.—This is Frank Forester's 'Bright Selim,' and a beauty he is with his rich chesnut coat and mouse-colored muzzle, and that is my 'Bay Trojan;' you have not seen him yet. Tell me, Fred, did you ever see a finer quarter, a more richly shaped gambril—a more sloping shoulder? What a round barrel too! and look at his chest! Plenty of room for the bellows in that chest, hey, Fred?—Good arm, short cannon bone!—What fault can you find with him?"

"None, by the Lord! He is a superb colt. How is he bred?"

"By Priam, out of Betsy Richards by Sir Archy. There is no better blood in America."

"He ought to run."

"He would, I have no doubt.—But he has never been in training. I bought him young at a very big figure, for his shapes, and as I cannot afford the luxury of racing, I have eschewed training him."

"You were wise, I suppose—yet I think I should have risked being tempted."

"Not I. I want him for a riding horse, not for a racer; the two are incompatible."

"Even so. Where are the dogs? Let us have a look at them, and then to breakfast."

"This way then."

And leaving the stable court by the side door, they went out into the oak grove, through which they walked a couple of hundred yards to the skirt of a green meadow, and there they found the kennel.

It was a neat wooden building of two apartments, the outer one paved with brick and opening upon a green court some twenty yards square, with a branch of the little brook, which was dammed above to supply the poultry yard and stable, meandering through it. Within was a second room furnished with wooden beds supplied sparingly with clean wheaten straw, and a stove in the centre, protected by a grated fender or cage reaching nearly to the ceiling.

The dogs—two brace and a half of superb setters, two black with tan spots above their eyes—two red, of Lord Clare's famous Irish breed, one liver and white spotted—and a brace of strong Blenheim spaniels—were rolling and playing on the grass, or swimming in the little stream, all looking fresh and vigorous and healthy.

"I give them a bit of fire at night, poor brutes, in this autumn weather.—It is hard to send them shivering to a cold bed after a stiff day's work in the cold water of our swamps.—Besides, a dog lasts as long again, when he is well cared for."

"Perfectly right, Harry—I never saw a more complete establishment for its size. But where are my pointers?"

"I was afraid they might get to fighting, so I had them put into a spare lodging which I have for puppies or bitches. Here it is, by the boiling room."

"And very well they look, poor lads," said Fred—"Good dog Don! good dog Punch!—should not you like to go out, old fellows?"

"You shall take them out one of these days, Fred; we will go down and shoot quail in the open fields in South Jersey—they will tell there. But hark! there goes the breakfast bell, and as there is a broiled wood-duck, celery fed, fresh reeking from the gridiron, it behoves us neither to let him grow cold, nor bide the brunt of Frank Forester's fine morning appetite.

CHAPTER VIII.

COMING EVENTS CAST THEIR SHADOW BEFORE.

HARRY'S prediction *was* well nigh accomplished, *would* have been altogether, had they suffered five minutes longer to elapse before they turned homeward from the kennel; for, when they reached the dining-room Frank was established, as large as life, at the breakfast table, with half a woodduck on his plate, a cup of black tea at his right hand, and Timothy at his elbow, grinning from ear to ear at some one of his favorite's witticisms.

"Just as I thought, Fred," exclaimed Harry—"all the broiled duck gone, I'll be bound."

"Only half, only half of it, Harry, and I sent word to Mrs. Deighton to put the other on the gridiron at once, just to save time."

"Wonderful!" said Archer.

"What's wonderful?"

"That Frank Forester should have thought of any body but himself, so long as there was anything good before him."

"Do you call this good?"—he replied, holding up a morsel of the juicy broil on the point of his fork.

"Not having tasted it, I cannot say. I should bet upon it though, by the way you are tucking into it."

"One must eat something."

"There's a cold quail pie on the side board, a buffalo's tongue, and the sirloin."

"Yes—but they are cold."

"And so the duck is bad is it, Frank?" said Fred

Heneage, sitting down to the well covered board.—“I had rather not take your word for it.”

“Not bad exactly—a thought underdone perhaps!” said Forester, who never praised anything.

“Not exactly!” said Fred—“upon my word, it is delicious. Is this the bird you and the Patriot-man are fighting about?”

“Skirmishing!—only skirmishing! I wish he would send me down a few brace of his sand-hill cranes, or a few couple of the blue-winged teal on which he brags so confidently. I dare say, as I observed last night, they are more delicate on the fresh water. Ha! what is this?” he continued, as the boy Dick brought in a pretty little note, upon a silver waiter, and presented it to his master—“who brought that, Dick?”

“Mrs. D’Arcey’s man, sir.”

“Ha! you’re in luck, Fred; it must be an invite. Exactly!” he continued, as he opened the note, and skimmed the contents—“compliments, Mr. Archer—this evening—coffee—happy to see his friend Mr. Heneage, Mr. Forester too—Ha! ha! that’s not so bad, upon my soul!—‘if it were any use to ask him, but as I have quite made up my mind never to do so any more, pray tell him from me that I beg he will not *fatigue* himself, by coming to what I think I can hear him calling that terrible old woman’s tea fight.’”

“She’s not a terrible old woman at all—I’ll be hanged if I ever said so”—exclaimed Frank, energetically—“not a bit of it, she’s a very good old thing indeed, an excellent old thing!—I’ll go for one, Harry, that’s a dead fact!”

“No, will you, Forester, indeed?” said Archer; “that’s something new for you, such a woman hater—”

“*Lady* hater, *fine lady* hater! if you please, Master Harry, yes, I do most cordially detest your genuine New York fine lady, that’s a fact, who is much too genteel to know anything, or do anything, or even

open her mouth to say anything—whose highest idea of society is to gather eight or ten grinning counter-jumpers, without one idea beyond the tie of a gold and silver cravat, about her; whose highest ambition is to have a more *elegant* pocket handkerchief than Miss Tare-and-Tret; who says ‘sir’ at every sentence, giggles at every word, and if a man of sense speaks to her, looks on it as an act of great presumption on his part. I do hate *ladies*, as they call themselves, but a good honest, open-hearted, frank, natural, *very* woman, I adore, I revere, I—”

“Hold hard—hold hard, Frank,” said Harry laughing, “if all these raptures are intended for my little friend Maria, they are thrown away pitifully, for she is bespoken!”

“Tush! tush!” laughed Forester, in answer—“a little saucy, blue-eyed, curly-pated chit, like that, a woman!—a school girl more likely, fit only to be marking samplers—no! no! it is the dear good old thing, I mean. Upon my soul, if it were not for having those two great awkward bouncing misses calling me Pa, I dont know but what

I’d put it to the touch,
To win or lose it all,

as gallant Montrose said or sang of old.”

“It would be to no purpose, she would not have you, Frank.—But what say you, will you go indeed? What say you, Fred?”

“Indeed will I”—said Forester, “I would not miss my game of piquet, for a thousand, with my venerable lady love.”

“We can hardly refuse, I should think”—said He- neage, sipping his tea, and affecting to speak indifferently, as if he did not care a farthing whether they went or not. “They must know that we can possibly have no other engagement, here in the country.”

“Oh! you need be under no restraint about that,”

said Harry, casting a waggish glance toward Forester "we are under no rules of strict formality here in the first place; and, as I give dinners now and then, they cannot tell that I am not expecting friends. So, if you think it a bore, as I dare say you do, for there will be no one but the two girls and ourselves, except the old lady, you can stay at home with fat Tom and myself, and let Frank go to 'the Elms' alone."

"Why, do you not mean to go?" asked Heneage.

"Just as you please," answered Harry, determined to let it rest with Fred himself. "I thought, by your manner, you did not care about it, except as a point of ceremony, in which case—"

"What the deuce is the sense of all this coquetting and nonsense?" said Frank Forester, half laughing, half provoked, "you both of you intend to go, as you know perfectly well; and, as there is no reason why you should not like to go and flirt with two very pretty girls, I cannot conceive why you don't say so. Look, here comes old Tom, rattling across the bridge with his big nags, and we have no time to lose if we are to shoot to-day, sit down quick, and write your acceptance."

"That is soon done," said Harry, going to the writing table, and inditing a note, which as soon as it was finished, he handed to Dick, saying, "give that to John, and hark you, tell Timothy to let him have a horn of whiskey—and then I want to speak to Timothy."

There was a moment's silence, while they were lighting their cheroots, and then Archer began again.

"I've been thinking, boys, that it will be our better way, instead of taking luncheon with us, and coming back to a late hot dinner, which will lose us lots of time, as we must be home to dress at seven o'clock, to have a regular cold dinner sent out to the Eagle rock at four o'clock, by which time we shall have got through the cream of our shooting. What do you say?"

“A capital plan by Jove,” said Forester—“but is there time to get up a cold dinner?”

“That quail pie has not been cut—and the inroad on that sirloin is small—there is a cold tongue, and a Strasbourg *paté de foix gras*, and *sardines*, if that will serve you.”

“What you say right is perfectly true.”

“Then hark you, Timothy, Dick will go with us to the cover, and bring the carriage back. You will pack up all the things that I have named, with all else requisite for a regular good cold dinner—take lots of salad along with you—and by the way, you may take a pot and boil some potatoes. Four bottles of the dry champagne, two of the pale sherry, and the brandy for Tom, and let all be ready at four punctually. We will go in Mr. Draw’s wagon; and I shall want the two black horses at seven before the big wagon—I am going to pass the evening at the Elms.”

“Aye! aye! sir—ay’se hae ’t all raight, ay’se oop-haud it!” responded Timothy; and at the same time Draw’s stentorian voice thundered from without,—

“Come look alive, or I’ll be arter you to-rights, you darned eternal snoopin’ laziest sort o’ critters?”

CHAPTER IX.

THE ELMS.

THE Elms, like Harry Archer's Shooting Box, from which it was but two miles distant, had been originally a mere country farm house. It was now, if such a paradox be permissible, at once far more and far less pretending, than the snuggery of that worthy. Far more pretending as a house, far less pretending as a place.

For though it was at least three times the size of Harry's box, and could boast its music-room, its conservatory, and its half dozen of spare bed-rooms, it had neither the parklike woods, extensive lawn and wild shrubberies, nor the capacious offices and out-buildings, which rendered the other so complete, as a bachelor's menage.

It was a low long irregular stone building, the windows of which had been altered and enlarged into venetian doors of plate-glass, with several additions of rooms and bay windows, thrust forward here and there without any regard to the original design, giving it a quaint and picturesque aspect, which was greatly increased by a broad green verandah running around the whole house, and following all its salient corners.

The house stood, as is unfortunately the case with most rural buildings in this country, within twelve or fourteen feet of the roadside, and, consequently, there was no space for any shrubbery, or ornamental garden between the low green fence and the verandah, which was completely overrun with vines and sweet-scented creepers.

In front, however, of that low green fence bordering the gravel causeway of the high road there stood, what in older countries would have been esteemed a rare and invaluable ornament to the most lordly dwelling—five Elm trees of that beautiful variety, which lend so rare a charm by the long aisles of their weeping verdure to some of the New England villages.

Behind the house, at the distance of a few hundred feet, the same clear brook which ran through Archer's grounds flowed deep and placid, dividing a beautiful terraced garden, with trim hawthorn hedges, and many a bowery alcove, from a soft green meadow bordered with weeping willows.

It was in a room overlooking this flowery slope; a room with a low ceiling and two old-fashioned embrasures with deep bay windows, that the three ladies were assembled, awaiting the arrival of Harry and his blythe companie.

Nothing could be plainer than the furniture, pretty chintz sofas and settees, and tables of domestic woods, oak and curled maple highly polished; but at the same time nothing could be in better taste, more elegant or more indicative of the usages of the best society. Nothing appeared to be designed for show; nothing but seemed to be placed there for daily use, from the cabinet piano forte, and handsome harp, to the embroidery frame, the water color drawing half finished on its easel, the prettily bound books scattered in bright profusion on the tables, and the superb exotics blooming in rare porcelain vases, the only costly ornaments of that pleasant room.

Nor was the aspect of the ladies, who sat there expectant of the coming guests, other than that which a man of the world would have expected from the mute evidences of taste and high refinement.

The older lady, who was indeed far more advanced in years than could have been supposed from the ap-

pearance of her younger daughter, and who wore her own silver hair smoothly braided across a clear and solid brow, under a snow-white tocque or turban, was one of those fine aristocratic relics of times now almost forgotten, which we so seldom meet in this sordid every day world of ours.

Her figure was still fine and graceful, though bowed somewhat by years and yet more by cares and sorrows; but her features, which had been once eminently handsome, although the flashing and vivacious light of happiness and hope had for ever left them, although the fresh hues of youth had faded, never to bloom again on her pale transparent cheek, were still high and noble, and unaltered in their expression of every generous thought and every gentle sentiment that can adorn a woman.

The elder daughter, who, though extremely pretty, was somewhat delicate in health, and of feebler constitution than her fair joyous sister, was lying with a shawl thrown across her knees upon a couch beside the wood fire, which the keen air of the autumnal evening rendered agreeable, while her mother read aloud in a rich harmonious voice one of Longfellow's noble ballads, lowering the magazine at times, to make some passing comment, or criticism; more deep than would be generally looked for from a lady, upon the exquisite art which lay, concealed by yet greater art, in the seeming simplicity, and apparently unpremeditated numbers of 'the Belfry of Bruges.'

Meanwhile, Maria looking a thousand times more lovely, than she had appeared, when she half captivated Fred Heneage in her close fitting riding habit, with her rich auburn ringlets now falling in long soft masses over the dazzling contour of her dimpled falling shoulders, her fairy waist spanned by a broad blue sash, and all the wavy outlines of her rich rounded figure enhanced by the full draperies of her muslin dress, was

flitting to and fro, employed in some gentle household duties, dispensing light and music from her sunny eyes, and the low tones of her soft voice, wherever she turned her steps.

The lamps had not been long lighted, and were burning in their opaque globes of ground glass with that faint and uncertain silvery lustre, which is so much more delightful in a small room and domestic circle, than the bright glare of many lights, when the roll of carriage wheels might be heard approaching the outer door, and stopping short under the Elm trees.

“Here they are at length,” said the elder lady, “I had almost given them up.”

“I had not, then, Mamma,” said Maria, “for Mr. Archer is the most punctual person in the world; and always keeps his word. I am sure too, that something has happened now, more than usual, to delay him.”

As she spoke, Archer entered the room with Forester and Fred Heneage, the latter of whom, as a stranger, he introduced to Mrs. D’Arcey, who met him with an extended hand and a pleasant smile, and said some gay good-humoured words in reference to the service he had rendered Maria on the previous day, which led to a response in the like tone from Heneage; and, in a moment the whole party were as much at their ease, as if they had been acquainted for a year.

It would not, however, have required the acquaintance of a year to discover that Archer’s face was a good deal paler than usual, and that his manner—*his* who was under all ordinary circumstances so calm and impassive—betrayed the remains of some powerful excitement.

Maria, who had turned to him, while her mother was greeting Heneage, saying “you are a truant again, Mr. Archer, and again I have had the task of defending——” stopped short in the middle of her sen-

tence, and interrupted herself, crying with something like anxiety of manner, but trying to appear in jest,—

“But good heaven! what is the matter with you? your lips are as pale as if you had seen a ghost, and your hand is trembling, you who never tremble at anything. Are you ill—will you have some wine?”

“If he is trembling, my dear ladies,” said Forester, who though also somewhat fluttered, maintained his ready wit and gay impudence unaltered—“he can reply to you exactly in the converse of poor Bailly’s reply to his executioners.”

“What *can* you mean, Mr. Forester?”

“He can say, it is not with *cold*, ladies, but with fear!”

“Upon my word! you are too bad. But he will kill you for it, I am certain, and that is a comfort.”

“Kill me, indeed!—I should like to see him try it.”

“Oh! yes, I dare say. I have no doubt you are a great coward, Mr. Forester,” said the elder girl, “because you are such a braggart—now I, who am such a poor weak wretch, am in reality much braver than Maria, who is always laughing at danger—when she is really afraid of every thing.”

“I!”—exclaimed Maria—“why, Jane, what a story! I am not afraid of anything.”

“What do you say to a cow, Maria?” said Archer, who was so much a privileged person that he always called the girls by their Christian names.

“Oh! I forgot the cow”—answered Maria laughing—“I am afraid I must plead guilty to the cow.”

“You are not in earnest!”—said Heneage, who seemed anxious to change the conversation.

“I am, indeed; do you despise me very much? If you do, I can’t help it; for I always tell the truth, and I am a little bit afraid of a cow—but only of a cow—of nothing else I assure you.”

“Of a horse you are certainly not afraid,” said He-

neage, in a lower voice, and with one of those deep glances, dwelling upon her lovely and ingenuous features, full of the warmest admiration.—“I never saw so perfect a horsewoman.”

“Ah! now, you have some bad end in view,” she returned with a smile, shaking her head—“since you are beginning to flatter me on my weak point, but I see your drift and it shall not succeed.—You want to divert me from my *previous question*, what was the matter with Mr. Archer, that he looked so strangely; and what Mr. Forester meant by saying it was *fear*.”

“It is a very strange thing, Miss Maria D’Arcey, that so truthful a young lady as you are, can give no one credit for truth but yourself.—I meant, as I always do mean, just simply what I said—that it was with fear not with cold that Mr. Harry Archer, the object of your intense solicitude, is shaking like a weathercock in a northeaster, and as pale as a sheet.”

“And I don’t believe one word of it”—she answered, glancing from one to the other of the party, of whom Heneage appeared considerably the most confused—“but I must know—I *will* know. I am a spoiled girl, am I not Mamma?—and I always have my own way, do I not?”

“Generally, I believe, Maria,” said her mother, with a fond glance at her lovely child, “but in this case, I must confess as great a curiosity as yours.—For I do not think Mr. Forester is quizzing altogether; and yet I do not believe, any more than you, in Mr. Archer’s being afraid. There is something strange in all this, and you had really better tell us, or we shall all of us fancy, that it is something stranger that it really is.”

“The only way is to ask Mr. Archer directly,” said Maria, “for I don’t believe he knows how to tell a story.—Is it fear, Mr. Archer?”

“Which made me pale?” answered Harry with a grave smile—“I am afraid that, even at the ex-

pense of jeoparding your good opinion, I must reply 'aye!'"

"Fear!" exclaimed Maria emphatically.—"Fear, and you!—Then it was not fear for yourself I am certain."

"I thank you for your certainty—it was not."

"Pray tell us now, and no more mystery"—said Mrs. D'Arcey—"for we are too impatient to give you any coffee till we are relieved from suspense, and I know Mr. Forester wants his revenge of me at piquet, and he shall not be gratified, 'till you have told us."

"Well, if I must, I must," he added—"But first let me tell you not to be alarmed, for no harm has been done at all, though there was certainly a good deal of danger, enough as you see to frighten me some hours ago, so that I have not yet fully got over it."

"Oh! tell us! tell us!"

"Well, we set out to shoot this morning, if you must know, up the valley of what they call the black creek, up to the Eagle rock, which, if you remember, overlooks the stream from a considerable height, and has a fine view over the mill-pond above, and the dark channel hemmed in by the rocks below. Timothy was to meet us there with some cold dinner in order to save time, after which we proposed to drive home so as to have leisure to dress coolly, and come to you punctually. But the fates ordered it otherwise—we had a fine day's sport, reached our appointed place, made a good dinner and were smoking our cigars calmly on the rock, a hundred feet above the stream, which was quite clear and shallow, with the big boulder stones all bare and dry in its bed, when all on a sudden, we heard a deep hollow moaning sound, and a great gush of white muddy water came surging down the channel, bearing a quantity of broken timbers down before it. We were on our feet in a moment, all suspecting what had happened, though by no means suspecting to what extent—that the mill-dam had given

way. A few steps brought us to a place whence we could see; and surely enough the dam, at which some clumsy mill-wright had been at work, had given way—there was a wide breach in it even then, and the waters were widening it every moment, and what with the roar of the cataract, and the crash of the beams and the sullen gurgling of the great eddies in the pool below the wheel, and down the channel, I never saw or heard a more frightful scene in my life. We had not stood there five seconds, before the door of the mill was thrown open, and poor old Dame Anderson, the miller's wife, came rushing out of it with her gray hair streaming in the wind, and screaming for help in mortal terror. At first I could not see the danger; but she had doubtless felt the yielding of the timbers, for she had scarcely reached the middle of the small wooden bridge which crosses the mill-race from the door, before one after another, with crash and groan, the lower timbers settled down into the torrent; the mill was swept down the fall over the rocks; and, after blocking the passage for a moment or two, and damming the waters back to the foot of the fall, was broken into a thousand fragments, and swept piecemeal down the stream. In the meantime the poor old woman's situation was truly perilous. The first arch of the bridge had been swept away with the house, and by the shock the ends of the planks, which join the shore, had been loosened, so that the centre on which she stood alone remained entire, and that swayed perilously to and fro among the whirling eddies. I turned away and ran as hard as I could to the boat which lay moored not ten yards distant, trusting that I might stem the current above the broken dam, and so rescue her—but I had not taken ten steps before I heard a wild yell, and in an instant the bridge fell, and she was plunged into the water and carried over the fall, in less time than it has taken me to tell you.”

“Great God!—How terrible!”

“But you saved her—you saved her—I know, you did, Mr. Archer,” exclaimed Maria, her bright eyes glistening with enthusiasm—“I know you saved her! say that you did.”

“She was saved,” replied Archer, gravely—“God be praised for it! but it was not by me.”

“Oh! go on, go on, Mr. Archer. I do not wonder that you were *shocked*, not afraid. Afraid is not the word for what you felt, at all. Go on, and tell us.”

Happily the waters were so heaped in the gorge below, that the fall was now not above two feet high instead of being ten or twelve, so that the poor old woman was swept over it unharmed; and yet more happily she had caught in her struggles a piece of timber, which partially supported her. Still she was in the most imminent peril, for the beam to which she clung was dashed every moment against the rocks and the loss of a minute would have rendered her case hopeless.”

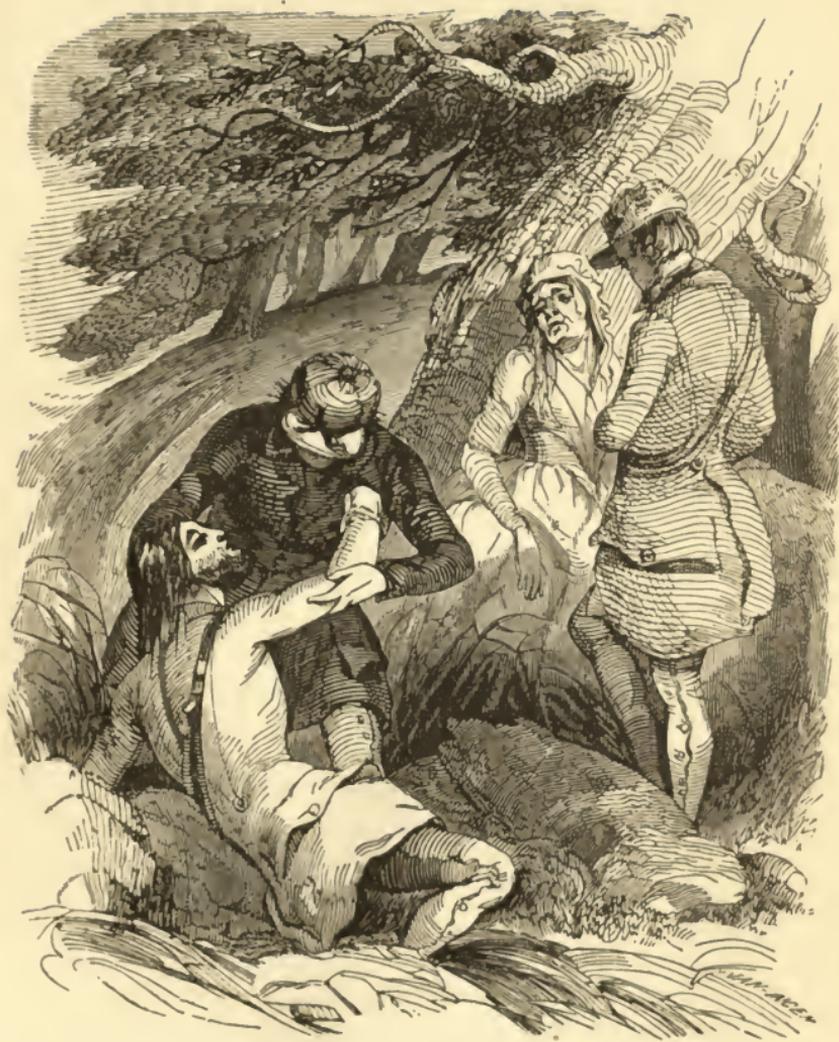
“But—?”—asked Maria, eagerly.

“But, how I cannot tell you—for I cannot now conceive how the foot or hand of man could scale the rocks that wall that channel—Fred Heneage rushed to the brink, threw himself over it, and the next instant we saw him struggling in those fearful eddies.”

“And he saved her?”

“He did, indeed, and most gallantly!”

“How fine! how generous! how noble!”—exclaimed the spirited and artless girl—“God bless you for it, Mr. Heneage—God *will* bless you for it.” And she burst into a flood of passionate convulsive tears. But mastering herself in a moment, she wiped them away, and cried, with a lovely smile breaking through them, like a sunbeam through an April shower—“See, what a little fool I am. But beautiful things like this always make me cry—and this is too beautiful.”



“And he as nearly lost his life by it as possible—for when we got down to the water’s edge, though he had steered the beam and the old dame into the shallows, where she was safe, he had himself sunk quite exhausted.”—*Page 119.*

“My Shooting Box.”

“It was beautiful, indeed,” said Forester, who was affected in spite of his half assumed levity.—“And he as nearly lost his life by it as possible—for when we got down to the water’s edge, though he had steered the beam and the old dame into the shallows, where she was safe, he had himself sunk quite exhausted.”

“And would inevitably have been drowned,” added Heneage, who had appeared very much embarrassed during the whole narration, “if it had not been for the courage of Frank Forester and Harry Archer, who, though they make such a stir about a little thing on the part of another, never say a word about themselves. They dived for me in the pool three or four times and at last brought me up, alive as you see.”

“And kicking!”—added Forester.

“It is of no use to try to make a hero of me in the business,” said Harry—“I alone, have no share in the glory. Frank would have been drowned too, if it had not been for Tom Draw, who is stronger than a hippopotamus and swims twice as well, and lugged us all out—but it was Frank, who saved Heneage.”

“Of course I must be dragged before the world like a bull-dog!”—exclaimed Frank.

“Like a what?”

“Heavens! what a simile.”

“Never mind the simile,” said Frank, whose end was gained, when the subject of the conversation was changed—“but for heaven’s sake give me some coffee, for it is cold that makes *me* shake, I assure you, I was much too hard-hearted to be afraid for any body but myself, let alone a very ugly old woman. Do pray give me some coffee Mrs. D’Arcey, and then let me beat you at piquet.”

“After that, I do not very well know what happened,” wrote Frank Forester, in after days, describing subsequent events to a friend in England, “but when I had

lost about seven successive games, I thought the room was very quiet; and, looking up, I perceived that Julia D'Arcey had fallen fast asleep, while Harry was sketching terriers' heads with a pen and ink on sundry sheets of note paper; and that Maria was sitting in an arm-chair, with her eyes very bright, her cheeks and neck very rosy, and her manner very tremulous, conversing in a very low tone with Master Fred, who was leaning over her, as he stood by the mantelpiece, and who had already broken into the smallest conceivable pieces a superb Louis Quatorze fan, and strewed the carpet with the fragments.

“Seeing how the cat jumped, though I was very tired of being repiqued and capotted, I went on playing, ‘like a bull-dog,’ ’till at last by the grace of heaven! Julia awoke from her nap, and asked us to go in to supper.”

CHAPTER X.

A PALAVER.

THREE weeks had passed instead of a few days, since the arrival of Fred Heneage at the Shooting Box. Yet he had shown no indication of getting tired of the monotony of the Warwick Woodlands.

It could not have been the shooting altogether, which attracted him in the first instance, that now detained him; for, although he did occasionally don the shooting jacket, and do his devoir among the quail and woodcock, he more frequently suffered those indefatigable Nimrods, Harry and Frank, to fill the ample bag unaided, while smitten with an unusual taste for solitary rides, he would back Harry's bay Trojan and loiter away afternoon and afternoon, day after day, among the lone green lanes that intersect those lovely meads and woodlands.

It was, however, a little singular, that though he ever set forth alone, he more than frequently rode homeward in company—and that in which ever direction his horse's head was turned at starting; it was invariably at 'the Elms,' that he drew bridle.

In one word Fred Heneage was as fairly caught, as ever was any son of Adam by a pair of bright eyes, a delicate wit, and a soft heart.

"In short," said Frank to Harry as they came home one night from the Hell-hole swamp with eight and thirty couple of *Fall* cock, and a brace of very tired setters, "in short, it is devilish clear, that within a few weeks more or less, we shall see him dragged like a bull-dog, before the hymeneal altar. I only wish he could have 'the Duke' to give her away. He has

given away a dozen or two of American girls this season, besides all the Britishers."

"It is no joke, Frank," said Harry seriously.—"It is, as you say, quite plain that there is a strong mutual liking, and my good old friend is, as plainly, well pleased with it—but I think there will be mischief yet!"

"How so?"—said Frank.

"If Theodore D'Arcey comes back from Chicago before it is all arranged—aye! and all concluded too!—mark my words, it will be broken off. Had he been at home, it would have been at an end long ago; or rather it never would have begun. I wish he would speak to me about it."

"Why don't you speak with him?"

"To say the truth, I am shy of it. He never gives me a chance, but seems to avoid the subject. Has he ever hinted anything to you?"

"Never a word!"—said Forester—"do you think he has fully made up his mind about it?"

"He must, Frank. He is too honorable a fellow to have carried it so far, unless he had done so. She is as much in love as he is, that is clear. By Jove I wish I could do something to bring it to a close one way or other."

"Give a pic-nic—I will take care of Julia.—Do you pin the old woman, and he is sure to propose. People always propose at pic-nics."

"Egad! you are right enough there, Master Frank but as yet, I hardly think it would do."

"Then why bother your head about it? Let every man manage his own mare, as the Scotchman has it."

"I don't know," answered Harry thoughtfully. "I don't know; but I hardly see how I can do otherwise. Yet, I confess, I am more anxious in this matter, than ever I was in all my life before. Fred He-neage is not a fellow to be affected lightly by this sort

of thing; and if it should go wrong with him, it will make his whole life wretched; and she too, she is a girl I can almost fancy a man's going mad for."

"Do you know, Harry, I have often wondered, so much of your time as you pass with them, that you have never——"

"Frank! don't, for God sake! you hurt me!"—said Archer, in an altered tone, with an indescribable expression crossing his face, and leaving him very pale.

Forester looked at him steadily for a moment, in great wonder, and then, very much embarrassed and half stammering, replied,

"I beg your pardon, my dear fellow. Upon my soul, I did not mean——"

"I know you did not, old friend"—answered Harry, hastily, "and I am but a fool. But let us speak of Fred."

"Ah! well!" replied Forester, collecting his ideas a little. "But I cannot see what you should be so anxious about. If they want to be married, they will be married of course. There is nothing to hinder them."

"Her brother! Frank."

"What the deuce! can he do in the matter. Or if he could, why should he interfere?"

"Fred is an Englishman."

"Pshaw! an Englishman of an excellent old family, of unblemished character, a steady fellow, with eight thousand a year in his own right, and one of the prettiest places in the West Riding! I never heard such stuff. As if he were not a match for any one in the world, let alone a little girl, with nothing under the sun but a very pretty face for her fortune."

"You do not know Theodore D'Arcey."

"No, God be praised for that same! But I have heard that he is a shrewd, clever, cunning man, with a sharp eye to the main chance. Now he must be none

of this, but a fool or a madman, to refuse such an alliance for his sister."

"He is all that you have heard. Yet if he hear of their attachment in time, he will not only refuse but prevent it. He is a man, in my opinion, capable of anything that should not bring him into collision with the law."

"But why? men do not let their prejudices war with their interests; particularly such men as he. Why should he wish to hinder it?"

"Because it is not for *his* interest that she should marry an English gentleman. To have her the wife of an American millionaire, a New York hunk of a merchant, who had made six millions in ship chandlery or the like, who spells soap '*sope*,' and on the strength of the spelling, or the money, is president of some grand literary institution—that indeed would strengthen his hand mightily! or, if not that, the wife of some political roarer, some puller of the cabinet strings!—or even, in default of all, to have her Theodore D'Arcey's beautiful sister! any of these things would add something to his own self-importance. To see her the wife of an aristocrat on the contrary—a feudal tyrant and oppressor—would cast a doubt on his consistency with the choice spirits of ward meetings, and bar-caucuses, whose 'most sweet voices' he aspires to gain."

"A pretty pup! indeed! you describe him. But if all this were true. He is not the girl's father. How can he hinder it?"

"The house in which they live—all, with trifling exception, that they have to live upon—is his!"

"And would he resort to such measures?"

"I believe him capable of resorting to any."

"It has a bad look."

"It has indeed. And to add to all the rest, he hates me with a hatred so deadly and so overpowering that,

had he no other cause than that hatred, and his knowledge that Fred and I are friends, he would move heaven and earth therefore to thwart him."

"It has a bad look, as I said before. But, I still think you must let them bide their time—you will only make a mess of it, if you stir prematurely."

"I believe you are right. But look there; by Jove! Frank, those dogs are making game—it must be quail running. We have got time yet before it grows dark to use up the bevy. Step up quickly, man, they are running fast, and will scarce lie hard in this stubble."

"Toho! there they are staunch," answered Forester; and they moved forward quickly.

"Take heed sir.—Have a care, Sancho!"—cried Archer, sternly; as the old red dog drew forward a few paces uneasily."

"Be sure that you mark the birds if any go to your right hand"—as he spoke a large bevy rose at long distance, and towering up high against the darkening sky, loomed larger than their real size, in the fast falling twilight.

Archer, unlike his wont, fired the first; for they got up wild, and were flying fast, and wheeling round Frank to the right. Whether the darkness was the cause, or the rapidity of his aim, he missed his first barrel, but cut down a bird with the second, out of the middle of the bevy; two or three of the other birds cringing and lagging in their flight, as the shot rattled on their wings.

Forester discharged both his barrels, killing two birds with the first, and making a clear miss with the second.

"All's right"—cried Archer, as soon as the shots had ceased to re-echo from the woodlands. "They are all down in the bushes along the little stream yonder, and it is so late in the evening now, that they will

begin calling directly and running together.—Hark! they are at it, already.”

“We had better get round by the crossing pole,” said Frank, “they are all on the farther side, and then we shall have them, as they rise, against the bright western sky, instead of their flushing toward that big blue hill.”

“Right for a thousand, Frank.—But pull foot, man alive, for it will be dark in half an hour.”

Five minutes had not passed before they reached the crossing log, which spans the little brook; the dogs bounded over it as briskly as though they had not appeared, half an hour before, to be utterly fagged out and spiritless.

Frank followed them across the rough hickory log, but Harry stood firm with his gun ready on the near side.

And it was very well that he did so, for Forester had not taken three steps on the farther bank, before both the dogs stood stiff, and three birds rose out of a thorn bush on the stream's brink. Then it was that Frank's sportsmanlike instinct told. For compelled as they were to rise between the sportsman and the red gleam, which was fast dying out in the western horizon, the birds afforded him a fair mark, and he keeled a brace of them over neatly right and left, while Harry cut down the third as he crossed him a beautiful quick shot.—Just as he fired, a fourth bird flushed, just at his feet, on his own side of the stream, and flew down it, pointing rather toward the dark eastern hill, and skimming very low, close to the surface of the brown withered grass. The shades of night blended so completely the colors of the game with those of the sere herbage, that even the keen eye of Archer failed to discern its outline; yet, though almost despairing of getting a shot, he stood attentive and on the alert, with his thumb on the hammer of his gun, watching the bright

surface of the stream, upon which all the light of the sky seemed to be concentrated, with a faint hope that the bird might cross it.

He was just lowering his but hopelessly, when at some twenty yards aloof, he caught the dark outline of a wing whirring across the bright and silent mirror.

His gun rose quick as thought to his shoulder, a bright ruddy flash gleamed on the dusky scene, and the shot pattered like a hail storm on the tranquil reach of the brook.

“Did you kill him, Harry?”

“I don’t know.—It was guess work.—But I think I did—yes! I did—I hear him flapping on the water. Fetch him, good dog. I have got him, Frank, and my first and your second bird.—Go on, be quick.”

In a minute more three more birds rose, and two flying up against the sky were killed instantly. The third, hovering low along the ground, got off without a shot.

Then two or three stole away like the last, unseen and unshot at, and detected only by the quick whirl of their wings; and Archer was in the act of saying,

“Well, Frank, I believe we must give it up; it has grown too dark altogether——”

When one of the dogs ran in upon the mass of the bevy, and flushed them all up, terrified and in great confusion. For one second only their outlines were drawn clearly against the last glimmer of the sunset; but in that second’s space four barrels were discharged almost simultaneously, and several birds fell, undistinguishable in the gloom.

Some time was spent in searching for the dead and wounded, but at last, by aid of the sagacity of the dogs, four birds were brought to bag, and satisfied that there could be no more, and that these last were the result of a marvellous lucky chance shot, they gave it up.

“This is almost running the thing into the ground, Frank,” said Harry.

“Yes, almost.—But it was a very pretty little rally, while it lasted. How many did we get in all?”

“Let me see. Two at the first rise, then four, then two, and now to conclude four, by good luck.—Six brace in all?”

“To be added to nineteen couple of cock—not a bad day’s work.”

And as he spoke they crossed the fence into the lane, and strode out homeward, at the rate of five miles the hour. They had not walked far on their way, before the sound of a horse at a gallop came rapidly down the road behind them.

“That is Fred, for a thousand!—I know the long stroke of the thoroughbred, too well to be mistaken.”

Nearer and nearer came the clanging stride, and now was close upon their heels.

“What ho! lads, is that you?” cried a joyous voice.

“Nobody else!”—cried Archer.

“I thought so. I heard you cannonading a while since; and was pretty sure that no one else could be so insane as to shoot after what the good people call early candlelight. What were you shooting, owls or bats?”

“Quail, Fred. We marked a bevy down by accident, and used them up——”

“Considerably—as old Tom would say,” added Forester.

“By accident too, I should think;” said Fred.

“Pretty much so, I believe.”

“But what is old Chance at? He has something in his mouth.”

“The deuce he has!—Chance! Chance! Come here good dog,” cried Harry. “By George! Forester, it is another quail. We must have knocked down five at that last volley, and this old villain has found it,

and carried it all this way, good dog! good dog!—poor fellow, Chance! poor fellow.”

“Has not he bitten it?”

“Not so much as a feather ruffed.”

“Look here,” said Heneage, “I will canter forward and tell them to have dinner ready. For I am hungry in the first place, and in the second I want to talk to you a little while after dinner Harry, and then I have some letters to write.”

“Do so,” said Archer. “I am your man,” and as he set spurs to the thoroughbred and galloped homeward at a rattling pace, Harry turned round to Forester, and nodded his head saying,

“Ah! that is well at last—he wants to speak to me hey?—He shall have a word or two of my mind I promise you. Look here, old fellow, after the wine is on the table make some excuse or other to leave us to ourselves for an hour or two. I don’t think he will unburthen himself before you.”

“Oh! never fear—never fear. I’ll respect your mysteries,” answered Frank; “but come, come let us step out now, or we’ll never get home.”

In spite, however, of that ominous prediction, many minutes did not elapse before they reached the white gate of Harry’s neat demesne; nor many more before the friends were seated at the table in the well-lighted dining room, enjoying a *pottage de gibier à la Meg Merrilies*.

Before he sat down, however, Frank turned to Timothy and said “it is seven o’clock now, Tim, I wish you would desire Dick to saddle ‘Selim,’ and have him at the door at half past eight.”

“What the deuce now, Frank?”—exclaimed Heneage.

“I promised to go down and have a jaw, and blow a cloud with old Tom, this evening. But I will be back before ten o’clock.

No more was said on that score, for Harry understood at once, and gave due credit to Frank's tact, and Fred Heneage thought how opportune it was that Forester should be going out that evening. For he had not the slightest suspicion of his own transparency, and fancied, like many other very clever people, that because he had been *woodcocking*, as Harry called it, or poking his own head into a dark corner, nobody could see his tail.

The dinner was as good as usual, and went off if possible, more gaily than its wont. The soup was succeeded by a *matelotte* of eels *à la tartar*, a rib of roast beef, a couple of woodduck, and quails boiled with celery sauce.

The champagne was deliciously cold, and as lively as the humour of the guests, all of whom were somewhat extraordinarily merry. Fred Heneage well pleased at the prospects of his love affair; Harry delighted at the accomplishment of his prospects, and not unsatisfied with the prestige which a love match would give to his Shooting Box; and Forester enchanted at having something wherein to laugh in his sleeve, besides a good subject for malicious witticisms *in futuro*.

After his second glass of Latour, however, with a sly wink at Harry he withdrew, and in a moment they heard the pebbles spurned up by the heels of his fleet horse.

An hour or two had passed before he returned, and when he did so, it was with an eye very moist and waggish, a cheek very rosy, a voice somewhat thicker than common, and a footstep which strove to conceal the slightest degree conceivable of unsteadiness, under a double allowance of jauntiness and elasticity.

Harry and Heneage had by this time withdrawn into the library; and the former was sitting in his arm-chair by the fire, inhaling the fumes of his favorite cheroot, with a face of most humorous satisfaction with himself and all the world beside; while his friend was

busy at the writing table, with two or three sealed letters before him, the fruit of his earnest industry.

“Halloa! Frank, the old story,” exclaimed Harry—“Potations pottle deep.—Hey? old cider sperrits, I suppose.”

“With two lumps of loaf sugar, a nail’s breadth of lemon peel, not a drop of acid, and the least thought of arrack—”

“Without any water, Frank?”

“With just as much water screeching hot, as there is *sperrit*,” replied Forester.

“Good stuff for a fuddle, Frank?” asked Heneage, looking up from his writing, merrily.

“Excellent good.”

“How about gittin’ sober on ’t, little wax skin?” inquired Archer, with a ludicrous imitation of Tom Draw’s tone and manner.

“About that,” returned Frank, “I’ll tell you more to-morrow morning. But what the deuce is all this about?” he added in his natural tone, working his way, tack and tack, up to the writing table, and taking up one of the sealed letters. “To Thomas Colley Grattan, Her Majesty’s Consul, Boston.—To Richard Pakenham Esq., Her Majesty’s Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, &c. &c. &c. Washington—To Messrs. Baring, Brothers, London.—Why what the deuce is all this—are you a candidate for office?—Why the devil don’t you write to his Grace the Duke of Wellington, he is the head of the department Mat—”

“And thereupon”—said Forester, in the same letter which has been quoted before, “I found myself mounted by that great robust beast Archer, and kicked into the hall, without being allowed to finish my sentence. When I poked my head into the room, which I did not dare to do for about twenty minutes, they were both laughing heartily, and invited me to a picnic to come off in three days at the Greenwood lake.”

CHAPTER XI.

A PIC NIC.

IT was a beautiful mild mellow Indian summer morning; one of those soft sweet days, which, when cold winter is stealing on apace, come like the visit of an angel, between the first sharp hoar frosts, and the stern weather that so soon succeeds them, visiting the last flowers of autumn with more than the balminess of spring, clothing the woodlands in a robe of more than summer glory.

The Greenwood lake—sweet lake, unsung by minstrel lyres, yet worthy as blue Winandermere to be the immortal dwelling-place of deathless poets—the Greenwood lake lay broad outstretched beneath the clear and cloudless sky, pure and unbroken as a Venetian mirror of the brightest steel, with all its forest shores gleaming aloft in the unnumbered hues and unrivalled radiance, which autumn nowhere sheds with a hand so lavish as in the wild woods of America, and sleeping below, reflected to the smallest leaf, in the calm surface of those unfathomed waters.

The skies were full of a soft hazy yellow light, soft as the sunsets of a Claude; and the great sun, larger and rounder than his wont, as seen through the gauzy medium of that rich mellow atmosphere, careered along more beautiful, if less sublime, wooing the waning year, like Danae, in a flood of gold, than when he scorched her in her prime, like Semele, by the intolerable glory of his unclouded godhead.

The air was breathless, yet so pure and fresh, that the briskest breeze that ever fanned the ocean, came not more gratefully to the cheek and brow, than that

delicious calm ; in which the aspen leaves, alone, might be seen to quiver, while all the foliage else hung motionless and voiceless.

A dozen or two of snow-white gulls, unwonted visitors to those inland waters, were fanning the air with their broad pinions, or swooping down upon their finny prey with the speed of lightning ; while afar off on a tall leafless tree, sat solitary and superb, a huge bald-headed eagle, looking down over his demesne of wood and water, an undisputed monarch.

It was a lovely scene indeed, and one well chosen for a party, such as that which was now preparing to embark on its smooth waters.

For with his usual knack of rendering every thing of natural beauty, that the country contained, in some sort subservient to his own pleasure, Harry had built and launched a pretty little schooner of some twenty tons upon that sequestered lake ; and she was now lying with her white sails hanging motionless in the dead calm, along side of a small pier or jetty composed of unbarked trunks of cedar projecting from the sandy shore into the deep clear waters.

A man and a boy both neatly dressed in blouses and trousers of white linen, with broad brimmed straw hats, were lounging about on the pier, whence Timothy had just departed in Tom Draw's large box wagon, laden with the materials for erecting a tent, and all the *batterie de cuisine*, with which he had been despatched from home on the previous evening.

It was still very early in the morning, so early that the sun had scarcely arisen twice the breadth of his own disc above the eastern hill, when the roll of wheels and clattering of hoofs announced the arrival of the company, and in a moment afterward the shooting phaeton drawn by the two fast black cobs, wheeled round the last turn of the wooded lane, steered by the knowing finger of Harry himself, and freighted with

Fred Heneage and the two girls; while close behind, under Frank Forester's somewhat rasher pilotage, the swift-footed chesnuts whirled along the light wagon, at a rate that was a little too much for Mrs. D'Arcey's nerves, although, to do her justice, she endured it with exemplary resignation.

The boy Dick followed as best he might, at a long hand gallop, upon his master's bay thoroughbred, from which he sprang to the ground, touching his hat with one forefinger, as Harry pulled up his smoking cobs, on the smooth sand at the head of the lakelet.

"Halloa! Teachman, how's this?" asked Harry of the boatman, before he had so much as risen from his seat, "are we going to have it dead calm all day long?"

"No, Mr. Archer, I guess not," answered the stout retainer—"I reckon we shall have a breeze down here to-rights, when the sun gets a trifle higher. The air's been kind o' breezing, oncet and agin, on the hill-top yander, and I did think as how it was a goin' to blow very fresh. No, no, 'taint a goin' to be calm long here. See—there it comes now;" he added, as the woods on the summit of the hill began to tremble gently.

Then, with a long heaving shudder of the many-colored foliage, the gust stole down the mountain slope, until wave after wave, the agitated tree tops swayed in successive undulations like the breast of the awakening ocean.

Down it came, sweeping freshly over the deep green meadows, bending the twinkling grass and the gay wild flowers, and making the solitary trees in the hedge-rows quiver and find a tongue. Then the white sails flapped loudly, and swung to and fro, and the long red cross pennant streamed out to its full length, and the brisk gale sang merrily among the cordage.

In that one second's space, the whole scene was changed. The bosom of the bright lake, which lay but a minute since one great and lustrous mirror, was

now all broken up into a thousand tiny wavelets—the rich gorgeous colors which slept there, distinct and palpable reflections of the autumnal trees, were all confused and scattered in the twinkling of an eye, though still as gay and glittering as ever; while on the top of every puny undulation, a mimic crest of spray flashed like ten thousand diamonds in the sunlight.

“How beautiful! how beautiful!” exclaimed Maria D’Arcey, starting up with her hands clasped in ecstasy, and her fair face radiant with admiration and delight—“how very nice of you to think of bringing us hither, Mr. Archer. Oh! do look, do look, mamma—look, Julia, at that huge bird, how he sits on that bare branch motionless, and in defiance of the wind, while the whole tree rocks under him.”

“You have a quick and observant eye, Maria,” said Archer; “that huge bird, as he sits upon yon quivering pinnacle, would be a subject for the pencil of Audubon, and your description would do well for the letter-press. Do you know what he is?”

“Some bird of prey, I am sure. A fishing hawk, is he?”

“He is your country’s emblem, lady fair,” said Heneage, laughing, “or I am much mistaken, though I never saw one before.”

“He is, indeed, a bald-headed eagle.”

“I wish I were within rifle distance of him,” said Forester!

“You would not shoot the noble bird, Mr. Forester?”

“Would I not?—I never killed an eagle yet!”

“Nor a sheep, I fancy,” replied Archer; “and yet I do not suppose you have much desire to kill one.”

“Do you mean to say that you would not shoot that fellow if you could?”

“I don’t know what I might do on the spur of the moment, I would not deliberately. And yet,” he added, “I should like to wing-tip the fellow. I would give a

good deal to have a tame eagle. But come, we are losing time. Let us get the awning up, and help the ladies on board. Sit still for a few minutes, girls. Stand to the horses' heads, Dick. Now Jem, now Teachman, look alive. Yo-hoa! boys."

In less than five minutes, a pretty awning of blue and white canvass in broad stripes, was raised over the open space abaft the cabin, soft cushions were arranged on the seats, and a carpet spread on the floor of the cockpit. The tack of the mainsail was triced up, and the boom hauled up a little, so as to swing clear of the ridge of the awning.

"Now step on board, if you please. Help Mrs. D'Arcey, Frank. Jump on the gunwale, Maria, give me your hand; that's it. Welcome on board 'the Princess Royal.' Now, Teachman, you must help Dick to take the horses back to the tavern. We will push off, and get her under way without you, and then lay to. You can paddle out to us in the bark canoe."

"Are the rifles on board, Teachman?" asked Forester.

"Is there anything to eat or drink?" enquired He-neage.

"To be sure there is," answered Maria, "can you suspect Mr. Archer of such ungallantry as an intention to starve us?"

"Oh no, sister, he does not care in the least about *us*; he is only thinking of champagne punch or something of the kind. Don't you think so, Mr. Forester?"

"I think you cannot help being ungrateful, because it is the nature of womankind to be so," answered Forester.

"That is not answering my question."

"Well then, no. That is answering it. I think all he had in his mind was ministering to the voracious appetites of those most voracious of all earthly—I beg their pardon—heavenly beings commonly called fine ladies. Will that suit you?"

“No it will not, you atrocious wretched creature,” cried Maria.

“Then I think all that *you* have left in his head, is a desire to attend to the smallest comfort of one fair lady in particular.”

And he accompanied his words with a glance so humorous and meaning, that while her sister laughed merrily, Maria turned away conscious that her cheeks were burning far too brightly to endure observation.

Meanwhile all were on board, the moorings were cast off, sail after sail was trimmed, and within fewer minutes than it has occupied to describe it, the gay pleasure boat was dancing away from the shore over the sunlit waters, dashing the foam with merry music from her sharp bows, and leaving a long wake of froth behind her.

The merry breeze sang in her vocal riggings, and blew out the white ensign of old England at the peak, and the long red cross pennant at her main, twinkling and flashing in the lustrous air like a forked tongue of pure flame.

Away they dashed past wood-crowned isle, and rocky headland, with the white gulls swooping and soaring round them, no fairer and scarce fleeter—now scaring the woodduck or the green-winged teal from some reedy shoal beneath some islet’s lea, now catching a glimpse of some shy deer, which had come down the winding path under the dark green hemlock, and through the crimson-spired sassafrass, to drink of those crystal waters.

The time itself was so joyous, and so delicious all the influences of the brisk mountain air, the gorgeous sunlight, the blue ripples of the lake, and the redundant foliage of the many-colored forest, that had they been careworn and melancholy voyagers, their spirits must have been raised and enkindled by the mere accidents of nature.

But as it was with minds all harmonized in their general tastes, all ready to be pleased themselves, and eager each to please the other, words cannot describe the mingled tones of sentiment and mirth, of deepest feeling and of reckless gaiety, which pervaded that happy party.

Ere long the little bark swept up abreast of the tall thunder-splintered tree, upon the highest pinnacle of which the great bald eagle still sat sublime and fearless.

His airy perch wavered at times so much, and bent so suddenly before the breeze, that it was difficult to believe it possible that he should long hold fast to that wind-rocked station. But never for one moment did the royal bird relax the strong grasp of his iron talons, or cease to gaze about him with a clear undaunted eye. Once or twice only, when the breeze blew most sturdily, he spread his wide vans abroad, and clapped them over his back, with a wild thrilling cry, as if he would have dared the storm.

The swift pleasure boat was gliding now within fifty yards of the point of the rocky headland, whereon the tall tree grew, which had served him for his daily perch beyond the memory of man, perchance before the time, if all that is surmised of the extended age of this king of birds be true, when any white man trod the shores of America.

Still he sat there serene and fearless, gazing down with far less of anxiety upon the merry group which passed along beneath his eyry, than they displayed as they looked wistfully on him, with eager eyes and throbbing bosoms.

“How beautiful he is,” said Julia—“I fancy I can read in the yellow glare of his fixed eye, which I can see even hence, the fearlessness and pride of his wild nature.”

“See! see!” cried Maria—“see how he claps his

great wings; I wish I could see him take flight.—Shout at him, Mr. Archer—can not you scare him from his perch?”

“I will try,” said Harry, “but he seems very bold. Give us a screech, lads, join in chorus!”

And as he spoke, he raised his voice in a long wild hunting halloa, in which he was joined by Forester and Heneage, protracting the shrill cadence until the opposite hill sent back the cry from every rock and salient knoll in strangely blended echo.

The wild bird spread his wings, gathered his mighty talons lazily under him, and fanned the air for it might be twenty seconds, poising himself right above the bare white pinnacle upon which he had been sitting. And they could see him bend his neck and turn his strong beak downward to gaze upon them, as if wondering what could be the intention of that unwonted clamor.

But as the long whoop died away, and the tumultuous answer of the mountains faded out, fainter and fainter, and heard at longer intervals, as they receded into the far distance, the distrust of the eagle seemed to pass away likewise; and, as the wonted silence resumed its reign over the lonely lake, he folded his broad vans, and dropping his yellow legs, resumed his seat as calmly as if he had never been disturbed.

During this little incident Forester, who was at the helm, had shifted it a little so as to make the boat lose her way, and remain for a few seconds nearly motionless.

But as the bird settled down again upon his perch so boldly, he shouted,

“By Jove! that is too impudent. He shall get out of that, or my name is not Frank Forester. Here, lay hold of the tiller, Heneage.”

And without uttering another word, or even waiting until his friend had relieved him at the helm he sprang

forward, passed the ladies, and jumping lightly on the half deck caught up a rifle, which lay secured in beackets near the bows, and raising it to his eye took a long and deliberate aim.

“Oh! don’t, don’t Mr. Forester,” cried Maria, bending forward her, beautiful face growing pale as death, with her hands clasped together.—“Don’t hurt that noble bird, I beseech you.”

“You need not be afraid, Maria, he cannot hit him even by accident.”

Frank drew the trigger, and as the piece flashed, cried aloud,

“Nor would if I could, I only shot at the tree!”

“And a capital shot too,” exclaimed Archer, as a piece of bark was stripped from the white limb not three inches below the eagle’s perch, and whirled away by the wind. Even at this provocation the haughty bird appeared to be either too lazy or too bold to make a rapid or undignified retreat, but uttering the shrill clanging note of defiance, once more unfolded his dark pinions, and sailed away slowly for a few fathoms, when quickening his flight a little, he began to scale the upper air in a series of easy and graceful circles.

But at the very moment when the bird took wing, while every eye was rivetted on the tree-top, to mark the effects of Forester’s shot; while Heneage himself, whose hand had scarce yet grasped the tiller, was gazing upward, careless of his trust, a sudden flaw rushed down a gorge in the mountain side, and struck full upon the sails as the boat lay with her broadside shoreward.

It was a sharp and sudden gust, and so vehemently did it fill the closely trimmed sails, that it careened her dangerously, and drove her so forcibly through the water, that the ripples burst over the gunwale, and verflowed the washboards.

As she turned over almost on her beam-ends, Frank, who was standing carelessly forward with his rifle in

his hand, was pitched clean overboard to leeward, and plunged with a heavy splash into the deep lake.

“Her helm! her helm!” cried Harry, leaping impetuously aft. “For God’s sake! mind her helm. Let every thing fly fore and aft! up with her—up with her—into the wind’s eye!”

There was a moment of real danger; and although it was but a moment—for the sheets were eased off in a second, and the lively boat came up to the wind, and all was safe in less than ten seconds after the flaw struck her—that moment was enough to distract the attention of every person from Forester, who, embarrassed by his clothes, and hampered by the heavy rifle of which he kept firm hold, had failed, though a light and powerful swimmer, to catch the channels of the boat as she went about.

The eye of every person, except Maria D’Arcey, who, in that moment of real danger which had blanched the cheeks and closed the eye-lids of all on board, except those who were too busy to give fear a thought, had retained all her calm and feminine presence of mind.

Seeing what had escaped the notice of the others, she had leaned over the quarter of the boat as it swept past Forester, sputtering and blowing the water from his mouth and making violent efforts to reach her, and cast the end of a long scarf which she wore, of strong rich brocade, with so much coolness and adroitness, that it fell into his hand.

With a gay smile and nod, even amid his own danger, he clutched it, seeing, for he too was perfectly unflurried, that the risk to the boat had already passed over; and was wondering whether she would have strength to hold on to it, against the force of the little sea which the flaw had knocked up, when to his great surprise and admiration, she cast the other end of it twice round a belaying-pin in the stern-sheets, and made it firm in a second.

Another moment, and the flaw had died out, and the little vessel was rocking on the squabbling waters, becalmed and motionless, in a small land-locked bight.

Just at this moment Harry missed him, and as he cried aloud, "Good God! where is Frank?"—that worthy made his appearance, scrambling over the taff-rail with the long rifle still grasped in his right hand.

"Here I am, Harry," he replied, laughing, "small thanks to you for that same!"

"And no thanks to you, Frank, that we are not all at the bottom of the lake!" answered Harry, laughing. "But, how the deuce did you get out?"

"By nothing but Miss D'Arcey's fearlessness and ready wit!" said Forester.

But words had been spoken in her ear of approbation dearer far to her than those, while the attention of the others was distracted by the re-appearance of Forester; for in the energy and excitement of the moment, Fred Heneage caught her hand, and whispered something in vehement low tones, which made her cheek turn crimson, but with no painful emotion, if one might judge from the quick glance of intelligence that was exchanged between them.

Just at that moment her mother turned her head, saw what was passing, and looked away again with a half pleased, half melancholy smile. Then as she raised her eyes, she met Archer's penetrating glance, reading her mind as it were, and changing, as he felt himself caught in the fact, into a cheery, joyous look, which assured her that the thoughts of each were dwelling on the same subject.

That interchange of glances, that by-play of a moment, between those four persons, established instantly a sort of free-masonry between the parties, and it might be said that the object of the pic nic was attained.

By this time Teachman had come up, paddling rapidly in the bark canoe, and with his aid the sailing

boat was speedily got out of the little cove, and stood across the lake until they reached the fishing ground or sunken island.

Then they heaved their grapnels overboard, and while Frank retired into the little cabin to array himself in dry apparel, the others set to work in earnest fishing; and between laughing and chatting, and baiting the ladies' hooks, and pulling up every two or three minutes a fine broad backed yellow bass, or big sharp finned perch, the morning passed away rapidly, until at a little after two o'clock, Timothy's clearly blown key-bugle was heard from the small bay wherein he had established his menage, pealing out with the well-known cadences of "Oh! the roast beef of old England!"

"There goes our dinner-bell," cried Harry, "stand by to heave in the grapnel. We must disturb you I fear, fair lady, and you Master Fred," he added, stepping forward to the bows where the couple had been sitting apart under the shade of the foresail for the last hour; Teachman and the boy being moored in the bark canoe a hundred yards astern, catching more fish than the whole party. Maria started at his voice, and looked a little guilty; and then in an effort to cover her confusion, pulled up her line suddenly, which had been dangling in the water at its own sweet will, and which, when pulled up, proved baitless.

Harry bit his lip, to restrain a laugh; and then pretending not to notice her embarrassment, crossed the bows toward Fred, saying,

"Well, old fellow, what sport?"

"Not much, Harry. In fact none—I have not had a bite."

To demonstrate which fact, incontinently he hauled in his line, which came up tight, and not without strong resistance, and lo! at the end of it, the finest fish that had been taken yet, an eight pound pickerel, which would not have been brought in so easily, had it not

nearly drowned itself already by its unheeded struggles to escape from the stout drop-line.

This was too much, and Harry burst into a loud laugh, for which Fred Heneage rewarded him by a sharp punch in the ribs, and a general burst of mirth followed; for those who did not know the joke laughed loud to make the others believe that they did, while those who did, laughed louder yet to prove that their "withers were unwrung."

Meanwhile the boat was under way, and they soon reached the sylvan nook, chosen by Harry's taste, many a day before, where Timothy had pitched their tent. It was a little bay with a white gravel beach, and a smooth slope of greensward bisected by a dancing rill, which fell down in the back-ground from a slaty rock in a beautiful and romantic waterfall. The narrow amphitheatre was girdled by dark hemlocks and rich feathery junipers, and over-canopied by an immemorial oak, under the shade of which the marquee was pitched, and the board spread with every dainty that the wood, the wild, the water could yield to Tim's *cuisine*, with wines from the sunny south, and fruits from the islands of the western sea, and every thing that would be least expected at such a sylvan meal.

Light hearts make very moderate wit pleasant; and loving ones can find deep sentiment in common places, and poetry in running brooks, and much soft meaning in the rustle of the leaves, which to duller souls, unsharpened by the great magician's whet-stone, are mute things and voiceless. But there was much true wit, much real poetry of thought and words, much powerful and earnest though unstudied eloquence, brought out at that happy meal. For there were clear heads there and powerful intellects, if for the most part they displayed it not in the ordinary routine of society; and cultivated spirits and kind tender hearts.

That merry meal went off, as all pleasure parties

should, and as so few do really go off, most merrily, and long left gay and happy memories in the hearts of all present.

After the board was cleared, and the moderate cups sipped, they strolled forth, two and two, through the wild lovely wood-walks, so narrow that one pair only could walk abreast, to visit the well-head of the stream, on the bank of which they had feasted.

And Forester, securing Julia's arm as if accidentally, while Harry gave his to the elder lady, Fred was enabled to monopolize his lady-love, and linger in the rear, whispering those soft nothings, which are so dear to lovers, so dull to all the world beside.

What Forester was about with his fair one the chronicler hath not recorded; but, from the constant bursts of artless laughter which rang from the generally quiet sister's lips, it would seem that he was as profuse of *merry*, as was his friend of *soft*, nonsense.

Archer meanwhile, and mamma, conversed long, earnestly, and evidently with deep and serious interest; and at last the lady replied to some words which he spoke so low as to be inaudible except to herself only, "I promise you—I promise you. Indeed, if she wish it, it shall be so. Why should you doubt it? I have no desire but for her happiness. If she say yes, it shall be so."

"And soon?" asked Harry.

"And soon," she replied, "though I do not see why *you* should be in such a hurry."

"Oh! my dear madam," he replied, laughing, "you know I cannot have my Shooting Box degraded, for whole weeks together, into a nursery for tame lovers! Besides," he added, more seriously, "I think when such things are to be done at all, they were best done, like all other *terrible* things, quickly."

"I believe you are right, Mr. Archer. It shall be as soon as they please."

“You promise me that?”

“I do.”

“Honor bright! Remember, I may claim your promise in a way you dream not of,” he answered.

“Claim it, as you will; it is a promise, with that one proviso.”

“Oh! that, my dear lady, is a proviso no longer. She has said ‘yes,’ I am certain, half an hour ago. Look there, if you please.”

And with the word, he pointed through a little opening in the trees, commanding a turn of the winding path, about fifty yards behind, and as many feet below them, along which Heneage was sauntering slowly with Maria, his arm encircling her slender waist, and her eyes upturned to her lover’s face, with all the beautiful confidence of a pure youthful heart.

No more was said then, and the homeward drive through the beautiful autumnal woods by moonlight, was very silent; for no one felt inclined to break in by words upon the calm and thoughtful happiness which had succeeded to the day’s lightsome merriment.

But when the ladies had been set down at the Elms, and when the friends alighted from the wagon, at the door of the Shooting Box, Heneage grasped both the hands of Archer in his own, and said, in a tone somewhat husky with emotion,

“God bless you, Harry, you are the *best*, and I am the *happiest* fellow living.”

“I trust you may be so. Heaven grant it,” replied Archer, solemnly, and something like a tear, unwonted and unbidden guest, twinkled a moment on his eyelash. “And now, mark me; that you may be so, act quickly. Maria has said yes, mamma has consented, yet—mark my words, if Theodore return before you two are one, there will be a row yet.”

“Good Harry, I lack no spur

‘To prick the sides of my intent.’”

“See then,” said Archer, laughing, “see then, old friend, that you

‘Live not a coward in your own esteem,
Letting I dare not wait upon I would,
Like the poor cat i’ the adage.’

But come, we can’t stand here all night; and here comes Forester. Let us go in. I see there is a good fire burning in the library; and if I do not broach the choicest batch of Burgundy to-night on this side the Atlantic, then call me a false fellow, and no true Etonian.”

“Hurrah!” responded Frank, pulling up the one horse wagon at the door, at the same moment—
“Hurrah! Eton against the world, fellows. Floreat Etona!”

“We will have that anon, and two or three other toasts I wot of, in some *nuits Richelieu*, such as the stern old cardinal would have pardoned *Cinq Mars* but to taste. Come in, boys. Take some rum, Timothy, and make yourselves a bowl of punch; we’ll make a night of it to-night, if we never make another in my Shooting Box.”

CHAPTER XII.

A ROW.

A WEEK had crept away, and yet another was fast drawing to its close. How happily the weeks run on to those who trace their flight by hours of love and hope.

All was arranged, all finally determined. The wedding day was named, the wedding dress was sent home, the wedding guests were bidden.

Fred Heneage was full of happiness, too deep for words, revealing itself only in his unusual quietness of manner; Frank Forester was full of fun, evincing itself in the wildest jests, the maddest pranks conceivable.

But Harry Archer was full of uneasiness. He was restless, excited, anxious; for ever counselling haste; and as unlike as possible to the calm impassive immovable man of deliberate and thoughtful action, that he was in his ordinary mood.

Suddenly a new fancy or freak appeared to strike him, and after seizing Heneage one morning and almost compelling him to draw a thousand dollars from his agent in the city, he drove off with Timothy in the one horse wagon, and did not return until late at night, bringing home with him a new team of four powerful and wiry horses in prime condition, high steppers and fast travellers, though all of different colors, for one was a blue roan, one almost white, a third blood bay, and a bright chesnut to make up the tale.

On no persuasion from his comrades would he explain his object in buying four new horses, having enough already; nor even to Frank Forester would he

unburthen any part of his mind, merely saying with a forced laugh that "Good horses were a good investment."

Meanwhile the new comers were installed in the barn, and exercised together either by Timothy or Archer in person, until they went almost as kindly, and quite as fast as Harry's favorite team.

The wit, however, of the Warwick saddlers was sorely taxed to turn out a set of four horse harness in double quick time; and the shooting drag was sent down to the blacksmith shop, the wheels new tired, the braces reinforced, and the whole machine thoroughly overhauled, and ready for emergency.

Thus things went on, Frank laughing at Archer's serious mood, and Heneage too much occupied to perceive it, until the middle of the week preceding the appointed day.

It might have been perhaps ten o'clock in the evening; the drawing room at the Elms was lighted only by the faint glimmer of a few dying brands, and by the uncertain moonbeams, which made their way through the white muslin curtains.

And in that soft and pleasant light, half darkness and half glimmer, two persons sat alone on a broad settee in the embrasure of one of the deep windows.

Fred Heneage and Maria D'Arcey.

One of her beautiful white hands was clasped in his, and her fair head, with all its wealth of auburn curls scattered in bright disorder, rested upon his shoulder. They had sat thus for above an hour, scarce speaking at long intervals a few low whispered words, for their hearts were too full and too happy to find vent in speech. Silence was more congenial to their spirits, and each perhaps interpreted that silence, as clearly and correctly as if it had been the most glowing eloquence.

Suddenly a dark shadow fell across them, as they sat

in the moonbeams, projected from a figure, which passed rapidly athwart the window.

Another moment and Theodore D'Arcey stood before them.

A faint scream burst from Maria's lips, as she started from her lover's side; but trying to conceal her alarm, she said instantly,

"Oh brother, how you frightened me!"

"No doubt!" he answered, with a sarcastic sneer.—
"People are mostly frightened, when they feel guilty, when they are caught deceiving."

"But in the present instance neither of these cases happen to apply," said Heneage, rising and advancing cordially to meet him. "But since the suddenness of your arrival has quite startled your sister, allow me to make myself known to you. I am called Frederic Heneage——"

"An Englishman, sir!" D'Arcey interrupted him rudely.

"Yes, Mr. D'Arcey, an Englishman," replied Heneage, struggling hard to retain his composure before the insulting manner of the other. "I think, however, that by the suddenness of your arrival you must have missed the letters which I had the honor to forward to you, some days since, under Mrs. D'Arcey's enclosure, to Chicago. If such be the case, to prevent farther mistakes, perhaps you will favor me by going with me to find that lady who——"

"As such is the case precisely," returned Theodore D'Arcey in the most insulting manner possible, "to prevent farther mistakes, perhaps you will favor me by walking out of that door, Mr. Englishman, unless you prefer making a speedier exit by that window."

"Being in Mrs. D'Arcey's house, sir, by Mrs. D'Arcey's invitation, and with her full consent in a few days to call her daughter my wife, I shall undoubtedly not leave the house unless at her bidding."

“You will not leave it?”

“Certainly not.”

“Then by G—! I will throw you out of it.”

He made a step toward Fred Heneage with his hand uplifted; and dark though it was, Maria could see her lover’s face, even to his lips, turn ashy white, and his frame tremble with suppressed indignation.

Then all the courage of her bright and artless character flashed out at once; and in a moment she stood between them beautiful, and severe in feminine authority.

“Peace!” she said—“oh peace, Theodore—for shame, if not for fear——”

“Fear!” he exclaimed almost fiercely—“I, and fear?”

“Yes, fear!” she answered—“fear of dishonoring you mother’s house, of outraging your sister’s feelings, of disgracing yourself, not him, not him—him you cannot disgrace—by this unseemly and unmanly violence.”

“Ha! and pray what is he to you, that you should thus defend him——”

“Defend him, I?” she answered, looking at him with a severe and fearless scorn. “Perhaps it may be well for you, that I am here to defend you!”

“What is he to you, I say—what is he to you, minion?”—repeated Theodore more fiercely than before.

“My promised husband!”—said the fair girl firmly, passing her arm through that of Heneage, as she spoke, “my mother gave me to him. I do not think there is any one, who dares try to sever us.”

“Do you not? do you not, indeed?—Dare, too! much daring, I trow, in rescuing a sister from an English adventurer—perhaps,” he added with a fell scowl, “an English impostor. Let go his arm, this instant, or I will tear you from the scoundrel.”

And emboldened by the composure and peacefulness of Fred’s manner, he advanced, as if to seize her.

But as he did so, casting his left arm about Maria's person, and making a half stride forward so as to bring himself between them, Heneage said slowly in those deep calm impressive tones, which, when adopted by passionate and fiery persons, betoken an earnestness of wrath and purpose more formidable than the most heady impulse,

"I have borne, Mr. D'Arcey, with much insolence—I would bear with much more at your hands, hoping that better reason, if not better feeling, may come to the aid of one, whom I would fain conciliate, whom I hope one day to call, to esteem a brother—but by the God! who made us both, if you lay but one finger insolently on this lady, and I leave you but one bone unbroken, my name is not Frederic Heneage. And you shall call me, at your will, adventurer, impostor or——"

"Did I not tell you so?" cried the fair girl, raising her head proudly, and gazing from the shrinking figure of her brother, to the fine form and noble features of her lover, "oh! Theodore, dear Theodore," she added, changing her tone to one of infinite and most caressing sweetness, "cast this false pride away from you, give him your hand, ask his forgiveness for your mad humor—he will accept it—he will receive you yet as a brother; will you not, Frederic?"

But before either of the young men had time to answer, Mrs. D'Arcey anxious and much alarmed, but still dignified and wearing at least a calm exterior stood before them.

"So, madam mother!" exclaimed Theodore—"so this is your precious doing?"

"Oh mother! mother!" exclaimed poor Maria, deserted now by all the pride that had sustained her—"save me! save us! Tell him you gave me to him! Tell him, that I *shall* be his wife!"

"It is so, Theodore. Whatever come of it to me, she is his! I gave her to him, she *shall* be his wife!"

“Dare you to brave me? Then I say she shall not—by G—! she shall not!”

“My word is pledged, Theodore! dishonor yourself not, nor my gray hairs by this fruitless strife. I say she *shall* be his; and who shall judge between a mother and her child?”

“Do you hear?—do you hear, Fred?” murmured the ovely girl, “dear, good, kind mother!”—and she half fainted as she spoke on that maternal breast, which had soothed her so often and so tenderly, yet never in so strange a crisis, of hope, fear, joy, and sorrow.

“Now, sir,” said Theodore, once more advancing toward him—“there are no women now to part us.—Will you leave this house, or will you force me to compel you?”

“At Mrs. D’Arcey’s bidding—at yours never!”

“Then, Frederic, I do bid you. My heart bleeds to do so”—said the venerable lady—“but to preserve peace here, and to preserve that ill-minded boy from the chastisement he merits, I do bid you, leave us! But fear nothing—you shall hear from me—Maria shall be yours!”

“I go!”—said Heneage calmly, taking up his hat—“you are quite right and wise, as ever. I go. Good night—Heaven be about you, Maria; we shall meet soon!”

“Never!” shouted Theodore D’Arcey—“never, if this hand have to do butcher’s work on you.”

Heneage smiled on him with ineffable contempt, and bowing to the ladies, repeated the words he had used before, “We shall meet again, soon, my own Maria.”

And she raised her head from her mother’s bosom, and made answer firmly,

“When you will—where you will—how you will, Frederic Heneage. Shall I not, mother?”

“I never broke a promise in my life,” replied Mrs. D’Arcey firmly, “nor will I do so now, cost me what

grief it may, or suffering, or sorrow."—When you will, Frederic Heneage, and where you will, except here, she shall meet you. This is my son's house, to my grief and shame I say it—to-morrow I will seek a place, where I may see my friends free and uninsulted. Till then, good night, and God bless you."

Heneage turned instantly to leave the room, but Theodore stood between him and the door, and squared himself as if to bar the passage, using the most insulting terms, and seeking to provoke a conflict.

"The time may come when you shall rue this conduct, but not now, nor here! Pardon me, Mrs. D'Arcey," he added, "I do this, but to escape a discreditable brawl."

And throwing the latticed window open, as he spoke, he sprang over the low sill, waved his hand to his mistress, and crossing the moonlit garden leaped the fence into the high road, and was lost in the darkness.

"Noble, indeed!"—said the mother, as he departed—"a noble heart you have won, my own Maria. Make way, sir," she added turning to her son, "make way—we leave you to your own evil thoughts!"

And without farther notice, they passed out, and left him there baffled, and almost foaming at the mouth, in impotent malicious fury.

CHAPTER XIII.

A RUSE.

SCARCELY ten minutes had elapsed, after the sudden exit of Fred Heneage from the window of the Elms, before he rushed up the steps of the Shooting Box, although they were nearly two miles apart, and entered the library, wherein Harry and Frank Forester were sitting, engaged in a game of chess, with a bottle of claret and a pair of half pint goblets at their elbow.

He was as pale as death, brow, cheek and lip; but on his forehead the big sweat drops stood 'like bubbles on a late perturbed stream,' and his whole frame shook violently with the effects of the great anger he had so manfully controlled.

"Great God! Fred!"—exclaimed Archer—"It is as I expected. Theodore D'Arcey has returned!"

"He has!" replied Heneage, throwing himself into a chair, and covering his face with his hands.

Archer rose from his seat, and walked up and down the room hastily for several minutes, before he spoke a word; then stopping short, he poured out a full glass of claret, swallowed it at a mouthful, and, resuming his seat, said in a quiet though anxious voice,

"Tell us all, Fred, that we may know what to advise."

"I never thought to bear as much from any living man, as I have borne this night," said Heneage gloomily, "I hardly know if, in honor, I can bear it."

"Did he strike you?"

"Strike me! what do you think of me, Archer? Strike me! no man strikes me, and lives one hour to

tell of it! no, God be praised! he did not strike me—but that is *all* that he did not.”

“Well, tell us, Fred. Do not be excited, but tell us all. We will have you righted, be things as they may.”

Quietly and deliberately he now related every thing that had passed, omitting not one word, extenuating nought, nor setting down anything in malice, while, breathless in surprise and anxious interest, Harry and Forester sat listening.

When he had finished his narration, he raised his eye to Archer's face, and asked quietly, “Have I done well? Is all lost?”

“Impossible to have done better. I only wonder how you could have bornè it. I only wish that I could be sure of acting as you have acted, in the like emergency. Lost! no, by George! all is won, if you will but do as I would have you!”

“How would you have me do?”

“Run away with her. There is nothing else for it.”

“I do not think she will consent to it.”

“Yes! she will, with her mother's consent—I can get that. In the first place, it is the only way to escape a scandal, and a fracas. In the second, he may, I fancy, give you some trouble legally, for she is not of age; and he is, I believe, a trustee or guardian, or some such thing, of some property that will be hers.”

“Damn the property!”

“Yes! damn the property as much as you please, but do not damn your chance of getting Maria!” replied Archer, coolly. “In the third place, it is his game to force you into a personal row, perhaps into a duel, which would destroy your chance for ever.”

“What is your plan, then?”

“I foresaw all this. That is the reason of my buying those new horses. Now we will send Timothy down the road with the new team to young Tom's, in

the valley of the Ramapo, over the mountain, and I will make old Tom Draw drive my old team down to Hackensack, and leave me his big roan and the gray colt. These, with a pair of leaders which I will get of Bill Welling, the stage-driver, will carry us over the Long Pond mountain to our first change, as well as the lighter and faster horses; and if we can get so far unpursued, we can reach New York easily enough, and get the business done in ten minutes."

"But if we should be pursued!"

"If we should, we cannot at least be overtaken before we have got our first relay in the traces—for I would not allow him to stop me in the road; and even if he should come up with us at Tom's, why I will stop him there, if I have to thrash him to his heart's content. But he cannot overtake us, if we manage matters well, until we reach Hackensack—and I think he cannot even then."

"But if he should?"

"If he should?—Why then we shall have old Tom there!"

"Old Tom! and what in heaven's name, has old Tom got to do with it?"

"Tom is very fond of Theodore!" answered Harry.

"Yes!" interposed Frank Forester, "Tom does set great store by him. Tom's your man in that matter."

"How so?"

"A little *ruse*, Fred! nothing more, upon my honor! It has just come into my mind, and must succeed. But it will be the better way, that you should know nothing about it."

"I do not see! no, no. It will never do. I will stay here. I will go to his house to-morrow, and claim her openly, and bring her away, in spite of him."

"And then he will strike you, or spit upon you," replied Archer, "in fact, force you to fight him, and you will——"

“Shoot him, as I would a mad dog!”

“It would serve him very rightly, I confess. But, except in Ireland, shooting her brother is not exactly the way to woo a sister. Here it would, of course, lose her to you, for ever. No, no. Be calm; listen to me. I will pledge my existence, if you will be quiet, that all shall go rightly.”

“Yes! yes! old fellow!” said Forester; “leave it to us. Harry shall have a quiet palaver with the old lady to-morrow; and she will settle every thing. Old Tom shall be down at Hackensack, with a trap for the lawyer ready set. I partly guess what Harry would be at. We will have such a glorious gallop through the old woods, as never was recorded yet in the Spirit; Dick shall precede us on bay Trojan, to have the relays ready; and I will ride behind you upon Selim, with the marking irons; and, egad! if there’s any shooting to be done, I’ll have a crack at the son of a gun myself. I owe him two or three.”

“Yes, do, Fred Heneage, do be ruled,” said Archer, “only put yourself entirely under my guidance, avoid that scamp, and stay quietly at home for two days, and I will pledge you my honor, she shall be your wife before the third evening. Did I ever deceive you, Fred?”

“Never, old fellow. I will do it! Upon my word I will. I put myself into your charge solely.”

“Run out, Frank, run quickly. Have Lucifer put to the light wagon, and fetch Tom hither instantly; take no excuse, but bring him!”

“Consider him brought!” said Frank, leaving the room without a moment’s hesitation.

“Ring the bell, Fred. Hand me that note paper, and the pen and ink. Aye! that is it!”

By the time he had got the writing materials, Tim Matlock made his appearance.

“Is black Joe about, Tim?” asked his master.

“Ay, reckon he’s i’ t’ hayloft, Measter Archer. He

was in here a piece sin, for a drink o' t' whiskey, and then he said 'at he was varry sleepy, and he's been gane an hour or better."

"Can you find him?"

"Ay'se oophaud it."

"Away with you, then. Stay, Mr. Draw is coming to supper; order a broiled bone and some fried oysters instantly."

"Aye, aye, sur."

The note completed, which Harry would not suffer Fred so much as to see, the black genius, whom Archer had described as never sleeping in a bed, or pulling off his clothes, from one year's end to the other, made his appearance, grinning from ear to ear, and pulling his woolly forelock with a hand as big as Goliath's.

"The whiskey, Timothy."

The flask was at his hand in a moment.

"Now, look here, Joe, if you answer me five questions straight, without boggling or dodging, a tumbler full of this. And if you do what I tell you cleanly, and without a blunder, five dollars!—Will you do it?"

"Try to, Masser Harry!"

"Who are you sparking now, Joe?"

"Golly, Mass——" the negro burst out with a horse laugh, but mindful of the whiskey, checked himself instantly, and after a strange convulsive explosion, in which he stifled his risibility, he replied,

"Missie D'Arcey' Phillis, *now*, Masser Harry."

"I thought so," replied Harry, with a nod of self-approbation; "and when can you see Phillis, Joe?"

"Mose any time, Masser Harry."

"To-night?"

"I guess so, Masser Harry."

"Does Phillis like young Mr. D'Arcey?"

"She hate him wuss nor pison. Why Gor-a-massy, all e niggas hate him, 'cause he never 'spectful no-how!"

"Exactly. Then go and find her, and if you let any one see or hear you, 'specially Mr. D'Arcey, do you understand me?—I'll be the death of you."

"Understand berry well, Masser Harry."

"Give her this letter, and tell her if she will give it to Mrs. D'Arcey to-night, without letting any soul find it out, I will send a new yaller calicker, and a five dollar bill."

"I'll do't, Masser Harry."

"How can you at this time of night?" asked Heneage, doubtfully.

"Nigga whistle, Masser Heneage, Phillis come amose any time."

"That's it," said Harry, "bolt your whiskey—cut your stick. Here comes fat Tom."

And with the word, in came fat Tom, amazed at the tale which Forester had partially revealed, but full of glee and promise.

"Well done, boy!" he exclaimed, "she's the all-fired prettiest gal in old Orange, and the finest any how. I'll fix that, Harry. Jest as you reckoned—I'll fix that down to Hackensack. He didn't say I parjured myself in court at Goshen, for nauthen. I'll fix him, or my name arn't Tom Draw. You shall have her, Fred. You shall have her, boy. But I'm as hungry as h—now. Where's supper, Timothy?" And with those words, the council ended.



"A RUN-IN."—Page 161.

"My Shooting Box."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE RUN—IN.

AT about two o'clock on a dark gray misty morning, the second after Theodore's fracas with Heneage, the shooting wagon might have been seen, had there been eyes on the alert to see it, standing on a piece of soft turf by the roadside, about a hundred yards distant from "the Elms."

None of its lamps were lighted, but in every other respect it seemed to be in readiness for an immediate start. The driving seat was covered with box coats, and the whole interior strewn, and the after seat piled up with an unusual profusion of buffalo and bearskins.

Four powerful horses, Tom Draw's old roan and the gray colt at the wheel, and a pair of wiry-looking active bays on the lead, were harnessed to it.

The cold hoar frost was falling in a heavy dew, and the horses had been carefully defended from its effects by a good blanket thrown across the loins of each.

At the head of the leaders, stood Harry Archer, duly accoutred for a journey, with long boots rising to his knee, a brown sack overcoat, and a Canadian fur cap, and beside him Heneage, as well provided against the inclemency of the night.

Not far from them, leaning upon the saddle of a fine thoroughbred, his own stout favorite Bright Selim, stood Frank Forester, playing, without thinking what he was about, with the butts of a pair of nine-inch duelling pistols, which peeped from the holsters at the saddle bow. His horse was likewise blanketed, and hooded; and Forester himself booted and spurred like

a dragoon, and covered by a sort of pelisse, like that of a hussar, and like it richly furred though not braided.

Few words passed between them, and those few in whispers; but it was easy to perceive that the men were anxious and impatient, if not disappointed in some expectation.

“It must be three o’clock, Harry,” whispered Heneage.

“Not yet—it struck two, about half an hour ago—I heard the Warwick clock.”

“And they should have been here at one.”

“Something has delayed them; fear not, they will be here, anon.”

But another hour passed, and there was no sound or voice of any one approaching, and the night was already beginning to waste toward morning.

“Stand to the horses, Forester,” said Archer, who was beginning himself to grow uneasy—“I will creep forward and reconnoitre, they may have mistaken the direction.”

He was gone about twenty minutes, and returned quite disconcerted.

“I have been round the house,” he said, “on every side, there is not so much as a mouse stirring. What o’clock is it? Have you heard the last hour strike?”

“No, but it must be hard upon four.”

“It is *past* four by heaven!” said Heneage, striking his repeater. I know her window, I will go and knock at it.”

And he would have put his words into execution, had not Archer held him back.

“You shall do nothing of the kind. It would ruin all—some casual accident may have prevented them to-night, and no alarm given, to-morrow it may be as well accomplished. Besides, I do not give them up yet.”

“I do, almost,” said Forester. “It will be light in an hour.”

“Not light exactly. But the day will have broken.”

“You must not risk being discovered here.”

“Certainly, not. If they are not here by five we must be moving.”

Another slow half hour dragged away, and long pale streaks of light were checking the eastern sky, and Harry had already taken off the blankets and thrust them into the boot, preparatory for a start, when a slight sound reached his ear, as if the clap of a distant door.

“Here they come, I believe, at last. Stand fast all, I will go see.”

And in a moment he returned leading Maria accompanied by her mother and an old nurse.

The fair girl was in tears and greatly agitated, and Mrs. D’Arcey whispered in Archer’s ear, that she had been obliged to go almost beyond persuasion in order to prevail on her to set out at the last moment.

Forester, seeing at a glance that there was no time to lose, lifted the nurse into the carriage in a moment and wrapped her comfortably in the furs. But it needed a little gentle force from Heneage himself, to separate the weeping girl from her scarce less agitated mother.

“I give her to you, Frederic. God bless you—be good to her!”

“May God so deal with me, if I ever give her cause to repent this measure,” said Heneage solemnly.

“Amen!”—responded Archer.

Another moment, and she was safely seated by the side of the old and affectionate domestic, and Heneage sprang to the seat in front, while Archer grasping the reins firmly, stood, for a moment, by the forewheel, impressing upon Mrs. D’Arcey the necessity of seeming unconcerned until the discovery of Maria’s absence

should be made, and then of being greatly frightened and astonished.

“I am but a poor actor,” she replied, “but I hope you will be far enough hence, before anything shall be discovered.”

“I hope so,” answered Archer—“but it is well to be provided against any fortune.”

“I cannot get my horse’s hood and body clothes into the boot,” said Forester, “what shall I do with them?”

“Roll them into a bundle, and pitch them into that alder coppice. They will stay there till we return.”

“Aye! aye!” said Frank, and in a moment he was in his saddle.

“Good night! God bless you, Mrs. D’Arcey,” said Harry, lifting his hat and springing to the box—“we must begone. We are too late already.”

And with the words, he gathered the reins gently up, and, giving a low whistle, the horses started altogether; and he moved off as quietly as possible over the smooth roadside turf.

But it was not destined that they should get off undiscovered, for in a moment Mrs. D’Arcey let the heavy gate fall from her hand, in her agitation, and it closed with so loud a clang that half a dozen dogs set up their shrill clamor simultaneously, and directly afterward the fugitives might hear a window raised, and a sharp voice ask who was there.

“Get away lads!” said Harry; “there’s nothing for it now but legs! We have got a good half hour’s start though—that is one comfort—before they can get to horse and follow! Get away, you old roan! no shrinking now, lads!”

Whist! whist! whist!

And the double thong plied by that stout and knowing arm sent them, full fifteen miles an hour, with the sparks flashing, and the pebbles glancing from their heels.

They dashed through Warwick village with such a clang and clatter, that every sleeper was awakened, and every window thrown up in a moment; and the loud baying of the mastiffs gave note of their proceedings a mile or more away.

Over the bridge they thundered, and up the long ascent toward Bellevale—they plunged into the deep woodland on the old hill-side, where the shadows lay as black as night.

Now they have passed the hamlet, scaled the bald scalp of Bellevale mountain, and as they paused a moment on the brow to breathe the panting nags, the great sun rushed up to the left above the eastern hill, and all was light and glory.

“So far, so good,” cried Archer, merrily to Frank. “They can scarce hold that pace. Can you see anything behind us on the road?”

“No,” replied Forester, looking back eagerly. “But I cannot see far—the shadows are still thick in the valley. I would lose no time, Harry; that blue horse of Theodore’s is very fast as well as stout; and if they put him to the light sulky, he may overhaul us.”

“Right, Frank. I only stopped to breathe them. Now don’t be frightened, dear Miss D’Arcey—this is a steep descent; and I am going down it, as if the devil kicked me!—but there is not the slightest danger—so pray don’t be frightened.”

“I am not in the least afraid,” she answered, with a smile; for the excitement of the rapid motion, and the sporting spirit which in some degree is native to every human breast, had overcome her agitation; and her bright eye, flushed cheek, and lips apart, showed that she almost enjoyed the race.

“Get away, lads!” and away they went, down the mile-long descent, over a dozen rough and broken jogs, with the stout wagon thundering and bounding at their heels, as if it was the merest plaything.

With a less careful and experienced whip than Harry, it would have been a perilous attempt to descend that mountain side at such a slashing pace. But he was a thorough workman, and knew his wheel horses so well, that the danger was greatly modified.

Still, as if to prove that such things may not be done with impunity, just as they reached the turn at the bottom of the hill, the near leader trod upon a rolling stone, and went down instantly upon his head and knees.

Fortunately, Archer had taken them well in hand a minute before, and their pace was greatly slackened, so that holding the wheelers back with a steady pull, his quick finger picked the fallen leader up, in a second; and they were on again, without losing much of their way.

They had not gone ten yards, however, before it was apparent that the horse was dead lame, and could hardly drag himself along.

“Lord! how unlucky!” exclaimed Harry, pulling up. “Jump down, Forester; take the ribands, Heneage. We must take that brute out, and rig a unicorn team; lucky that I have got spare reins in the tool box. Look alive, Frank!—Look alive, by George! I think I hear wheels on the hill top.”

It was not above ten minutes, before, by dint of working and quick wit, the four-horse team was converted into a unicorn, and the poor lame leader tied to a tree at the roadside.

As Harry resumed his seat, he said in a low voice to Forester, “keep near us, Frank; I am sure they are close at our heels; if these nags cannot get us up the hill, we must put Selim on the lead, along with that brute.”

Frank listened for a moment, and then nodded his head, saying, “You are right; but we have a mile’s start yet, or better.”

Then, just as Harry set his team to work again, he added, with a significant glance, dropping his right hand toward his holster,

“His horse?—hey, Harry——?”

“For God’s sake, no! not for your life!” exclaimed Harry, seriously alarmed.

“Just as you say,” replied Frank. “But I think it would be the easiest way.”

“No! no! we can do without that. If we can once get up this hill before him, he can’t catch us this side Hackensack.”

On they went—on! plying the lash—no time to spare whip-cord or horse-flesh.

They crashed over the wooden bridge that spans the feeder of Long Pond; they passed Wright’s little tavern, and there Harry pulled up for one second.

“Wright! Wright! Holloa! I have left a lame horse on the road—send back for him, and keep him till I come.”

“Aye! aye! sir.”

“Whist! whist! whist!”—

Down came the double thong again upon the wheel-er’s flanks, marking them gridiron-wise; now the long lash flies out, and the leader springs as if a snake had bitten him under the collar.

Away! away—they strain up the long slope—they spin through the turnpike-gate.

“Forester pays, close behind us!”

“All right, Mr. Archer.”

They gain the hill-top, and again pull up by a little spring-head on the mountain’s brow.

“That bottle, Heneage; and the sponge—they are in the locker at your feet. There jump out, and unstrap the leathern bucket from the perch!”

“Have we time?”

“We must make time.”

And with the rapid coolness of a practised groom

Harry spunged out their mouths, and drenched them with the powerful Scotch ale, and rubbed their heads and eyes carefully.

Just as he had got through the job, Forester, who had lagged behind, came galloping up like the wind.

“Drive! drive!” he shouted—“D’Arcey is within a quarter of a mile with that blue horse striding out at sixteen miles the hour, and two horsemen with him.”

“Never fear, never fear. It is all down hill work now, we will beat him easy, and it is but five miles to our first change. Take a little wine and water, Maria, you look pale—help her Heneage—get away now. See how the drink has freshened them.”

And through the green woods they rushed on, up gentle slopes and down steep pitches, the whoops of their pursuers as they yelled to their horses, ringing in their ears. Fast they went—faster yet the enemy gained on them.

“Is the axe handy?” asked Frank coming along side. “Yes, under your feet, Heneage; give it to him,” replied Harry.

“For what?” inquired Heneage.

“Give it to me, never mind!” answered Forester; and reaching out his hand he received it without slackening his pace.

Another minute, they rattled over a crazy wooden bridge crossing a brawling brooklet, whirled round a woody corner, and lost sight of Forester.

“If Frank has time; we are safe now,” said Harry, easing the horses up a steep pitch as he spoke.

“Time to do what?”

“Listen!”

And the clang of an axe was distinctly audible, and then a heavy rushing sound and a splash, as of a beam falling in the water.

“All’s well! all’s well! excellent, Frank!” shouted Archer.

But as he spoke there came the sharp crack of a pistol shot; and Harry turned as pale as death. It was but for a moment, however, that his alarm lasted, for the quick clash of Selim's hoofs, and a loud whoop of defiance in Frank's cheery voice, reassured him.

Before they had gone half a mile he overtook them laughing heartily.

"I have given them a quarter of an hour's work," he said, "and D'Arcey looked so blue when he saw the bridge broken, that I could not refrain from giving him the masonic sign, thumb to the nose, you know, fingers extended, and twirled with a rotatory motion! It was too bad, I confess; and I came near paying dear for it—for he treated me to a pistol shot—but lord help him, D'Arcey never could *shoot anywhere*, as our friend Colonel M'Carthy has it. I had half a mind to show him that I could; but I refrained from pure regard to our fair lady here."

"Here we are at the saw-mill—now we are on good plain road, and only two miles from our change.—This is the valley of the Ramapo, is it not beautiful?" said Harry, wishing to keep up the excitement.—"Now get out the key bugle; we must give Tim warning to have the nags ready. That is it! can you blow, Henneage? No. Give me hold then, and do you tool these fellows in, they will not be sorry to get to their journey's end. What shall I give you, Miss Maria, God save the king or Yankee Doodle?"

"The Rogue's march! I should recommend;" said Forester.

"You be hanged!" and as he spoke, he raised the instrument to his lips, and the delightful notes of "the young May morn is beaming, love" rang far and wide over wood, road, and river.

A long wild whoop replied to them; and in ten minutes more they wheeled up to the front of young Tom's tavern, where stood the new team, bright and in tip-top

condition, each with his blanket on, and a man by his head, Timothy superintending all, and young Tom waiting with a gallon of iced milk punch and tumblers on a huge wooden waiter.

The punch was discussed, a joke or two cracked, the tired team out, and the fresh team in, in less than three minutes. But just as they were starting, Harry's eye caught the face of one of the men who had helped to change the horses.

"Holloa, M'Tavish, what are you doing here?"

"Got a drove of horses from Ohio, Mr. Archer." The man answered.

"Bad luck to it!" whispered Harry to Heneage. "That is the flying Dutchman, he has some racers for a thousand; and D'Arcey can get a relay, if he will pay for it."

"Here he comes—here he comes"—shouted For-ester, who had now backed Bay Trojan, and at the same moment the sulky came in sight with the blue horse straining every muscle, but almost reeling with fatigue, black with sweat, and embossed with foam.

"I don't care sixpence for him" replied Archer, putting his horses all together to a fine square trot. "This new catch team will do their fifteen miles an hour, all together, without breaking. It is but eighteen into Hackensack; we shall be there in an hour and a quarter."

"He will catch us there."

"If he do, he will catch a Tartar."

CHAPTER XV.

WON IN A CANTER.

THE sharp work was over, and the race won, as all fancied; but still Harry relaxed nothing of his skill, or his horses' speed. For without worrying them at all, he kept them all at three parts speed, on a beautiful high trot, holding enough in hand to spare for a puff, in case their pursuers should come up.

"These horses perform beautifully," said Heneage, who was now growing easier in mind.

"Yes. Very fairly, for a catch team. That blue roan has a nice cat-like, easy gait. He can go seventeen miles the hour, and does not look as if he were doing ten. The white horse snatches at his bit a thought too much, and the sorrel bores. But they do very well—very well, as I said, for a catch team."

"You were lucky to *catch* such a team, at so short a notice."

"You mean to say that *you* were. It was no luck to me, for I don't want them. As for the rest, I always know where there are good horses, and what will buy them. These cost me a pretty figure."

"How much?"

"They spoiled the face of a thousand dollar bill, I assure you."

"Well, you shall be no loser, Harry, if we win. I shall want four horses to take home, and show them in the Park what Yankee trotters can do——"

"To win a Yankee wife!" said Archer, with a sly glance at Maria.

"I will give you a thousand for them, at all events."

"No, you won't!"

“Why not? I will, I say. You shall not be a loser, for my nonsense.”

“Hold! hold hard, Fred; do you call this nonsense? No, I won’t sell them; I mean them for a wedding present to one Mrs. Frederic Heneage; do you know such a lady?”

While they were chatting thus, they had left the valley of the Ramapo, left Garry Bamber’s and New Prospect, left the bright stream that turns Zabrisky’s mills, and his snug cottage far behind them. They had clomb the first pitch of the Red hills, and could see Hackensack lying in the broad vale, scarcely four miles away.

At this moment Forester, whom they had not seen since they left young Tom’s, overtook them at a gallop.

“He has got a horse,” he cried, as he came within ear-shot, “from the flying Dutchman, and a remount for both his men. I waited on him all the way, and he is now nearly up with us—not half a mile off.”

“On horseback, or in the sulky?”

“On horse—and a devilish good horse, too!—It was only on a distance, that the Trojan could leave him.”

“Are his men up with him?”

“Not quite—a quarter of a mile behind.”

“All right—keep near us.”

“He will overhaul you.”

“Not yet, not yet,” replied Harry, flanking his off-leader, “Go up to your traces, sirrah!—not yet. I cannot afford to let him overhaul us quite yet.”

And he put his horses all into a gallop down a gentle declivity, where the road was hard and even.

In a few moments, however, they got into deep sand, and the nags fell into a trot. D’Arcey came in sight, and, when they were yet a mile or two distant from Hackensack, he rode up alongside.

“Stop! stop!” he shouted.

“To whom are you speaking, sir?” asked Archer,

keeping his horses to their work, but without quickening his pace.

“Stop instantly!” repeated Theodore, thrusting his hand into the bosom of his riding-frock, “or I will shoot your leader.”

Without saying one word, Harry Archer put the reins into Heneage’s hands—“Keep them just there!”—then stooped and drew one of the long-barrelled Kuch-enreüters from a holster, under the box, cocked it quietly, and then turning to D’Arcey, who, notwithstanding his threat, had not drawn his pistol, said calmly—

“You are a lawyer, Mr. D’Arcey, and know what right a man has to deal summarily with one who stops him on the high-road with threats. You have fired once at our party this morning. Now, sir, if I choose it, I might shoot you, without fear of consequences, through the head—but, upon my honor, you are not worth the powder and shot. Frank Forester, ride close to his bridle-rein—that is it—keep just there. Now, if he draws his pistols, knock him off his horse with your iron hunting-whip.”

D’Arcey looked round for the support of his men, but although in sight, they were too far off to assist him, and he reined up his horse to await their aid, with a bitter oath.

“I’ll pay you for this, ere you are fifteen minutes older. We shall meet in Hackensack.”

“I hope so,” replied Archer. “Now for the key-bugle. I must let old Tom know that we are coming. I think Yankee Doodle will be the best now, to cheer the gentleman up a little.”

And with the words, he blew the strain up clear and shrill, and met his reply instantly, in such a stentorian roar from the lips of old Draw, although at half a mile’s distance, as drowned the sounds of the vocal brass.

Five minutes more, and they pulled up under the long Dutch porch of Vanderbeck's neat tavern, where Harry's own team, the blacks and chesnuts, were ready in their neat clothes, and pawing the ground, eager for a start.

The fat man stood on the step of the bar-room, in his element; but his face fell a little, as he saw that there were no pursuers in sight.

"How's this? how's this? boys"—he shouted, harn't he had heart to foller? Darnation, that's bad. I'd a-played a merry hell with him—if he'd comed down. Harn't you heard on him?"

"Indeed have we," said Archer. That chesnut on the near lead, Joe. He would have caught us beyond young Tom's, if Forester had not broken the bridge!"

"Who-whoop! who-whoop! By the Eternal; did he though?—did he break down the bridge?—he's a peeler, is little wax skin anyhow. But you harn't seen him since? hey?"

"Not ten minutes ago. He bought a fresh horse from the Dutchman, and overhauled us on the Red hills, and threatened to shoot my leader."

"Consarn his hide on him! Did he, though? Wait jest a little, Aircher, dew, and see how I'll fix him off."

"Have you got it all made right?"

"Sartain. I made the afferdavit, and Squire Breawn, he gin me a warrant slick away, to hold him for a thousand. Mike here has got the warrant."

"Can't he get bail, here?"

"I guess not—he harn't got no friends no how—unless so be, Mr. Aircher, you bids Vanderbeck bail him."

"I don't think I shall do that," said Archer laughing. "Now to make all sure, Forester, you must stay back here, and if Tom's warrant fail, or he gets bailed which I think he can't, swear your life against him, and bind him to keep the peace."

At this moment D'Arcey and his two men galloped up, just as Archer was going to ascend his box.

"We are in time," he shouted. "Seize the horses by the heads, Peter."

And as he spoke, he leaped to the ground, and was dashing forward, when old Tom threw his hat into the air with a prodigious whoop, and leaped down in front of him.

"I parjured myself didn't I, you eternal thunderin' liar? He's your man, constable, lay hold on him."

"Is your name Theodore D'Arcey, sir?" said the other man, approaching him.

"What if it be?" he asked hastily.

"You are my prisoner, sir," he replied, laying his hand on his shoulder, "unless you can give bail for a thousand dollars, to answer Mr. Draw's charge of defamation."

"It is a d—d trick—help me here, Dick, Peter; I'll hold you harmless."

"I charge you in the State's name, assist me"—shouted the constable to Archer, holding D'Arcey with a firm gripe.

"Stand back, stand back, man; keep the peace," cried Archer, as the men pressed on to rescue Theodore.

"Nay, then, take that!"

And suiting the action to the word he dealt the foremost a flush blow in the face, which hurled him to the ground, helpless and motionless; while fat Tom seizing the second by the scruff of his neck, as he termed it, and the seat of his breeches, hurled him over his head, as cleanly as if he had shot from an engine.

Resistance was in vain, and seeing that it was so, D'Arcey began to parley.

"We will cut all this short, in a moment, sir," said Harry "step with me into the next room, sign a full consent of your sister's marriage with my friend, which you cannot prevent—make a virtue to necessity—shake

hands with Heneage, who is a right good fellow, and will forgive and forget—ride back to my place, spare us all farther trouble, and let the whole affair end as it should, by a quiet wedding at the Elms.—Then I will be your bail, or at least will indemnify a bailman for you here, and will get Tom to withdraw his suit. Come, let it be a bargain.”

“Oh! do, brother—do, dear Theodore.”

“There is my hand,” said Heneage cordially.

“And I’ll say nothing about that cursed bad shot you made,” said Forester, laughing.

“And you may say that I’m parjured jest ten times a day if you will”—said Tom, “’taint much slànder no how”—he added in a low voice, “seein who it comed from.”

“I will see you all at the devil first,” said he spitefully.

“May be you will”—said old Tom, “consid’rin that you’ll go there sartain—but we’ll see you in the stone jug fust. Come constable, do your dooty.”

“Do you wish time to find bail, sir?”

“I can find none here; I must send to the city.”

“No need for that, Mr. D’Arcey,” said Forester tauntingly, “we shall be back this afternoon, and we will let you out then, when you can do no more harm.”

“Oh brother!” exclaimed Maria, looking tenderly at him, with clasped hands.

But seeing by the expression of his face that some bitter, perhaps brutal reply was coming, Harry spared her the pain of hearing it, by putting his beautiful fresh team to the trot.

In less than an hour, they reached the ferry, with the nags all fresh and lively, and all in good spirits, for Maria, convinced that her brother would suffer no inconvenience beyond a temporary detention, was now well disposed to treat the whole matter as a joke.

Their glee was augmented too by the arrival of Frank,

who came up with them at Hoboken, laughing so that he could hardly sit in his saddle.

“He is jugged”—he cried—“fairly jugged, and that old devil Tom is sitting at his cell door, plaguing him—I would not be in Tom’s shoes for a thousand if he should get out—I believe he’s gnawing the bars to get at him. If I were you, Fred, I would look before I leaped.—These things run in the blood. I dare say she’ll beat you before three weeks are over.”

“I certainly would beat you,” answered Maria, shaking her little hand at him, “if I could reach you.”

“Of course you would. That is woman’s gratitude. Because I broke the bridge for you, and got shot at by that bungling fellow! I dare say he’ll have me indicted too, and jugged myself for defacing the highway.”

“We’ll hold you free from damage,” said Archer—“but, here we are, at the foot of Barclay St.—What o’clock? only half past nine by George—fifty miles over such roads, in four hours, is going. Whither now? To the Globe?”

“Oh! yes, to Blancard’s certainly.”

“And a cab thence to the mayor’s office,” added Harry.

“I wish I could go with you thither,” said Forester, “but I have urgent and immediate business.”

“The deuce! what is that?”

“Oh never mind! I will be here when you get back.”

“Here we are—then.—How do you do, Blancard?—These ladies to your best private parlor—my horses to the stable, and a good four wheeled cab directly.”

“Directly, Mr. Archer,” said that prince of hosts, bowing and smiling, and showing the beautiful girl the way up stairs, marvelling greatly what could be in the wind, but too discreet to say a word or ask a question.

It was barely eleven o’clock when Fred and Harry, after handing Maria and her old companion into the cab, jumped in themselves, and drove away to

what the papers call the hymeneal altar; curiously represented by a mayor's mahogany desk, with a rum looking genius in very foggy spectacles, cracking most lamentable jests, and looking as if begot by an owl of a methodist parson, as the officiating priest.

At twelve o'clock they returned, happy man, happy bride. And then it was apparent what had been Fred's urgent and immediate business.

For after they had sat with the ladies about ten minutes, Blancard himself entered discreetly, and begging pardon for the interruption, informed Archer that his presence and that of Mr. Heneage was earnestly requested in another room.

"Good Heaven! what can it be?" said Heneage.

"Some of Frank's folly I'll be bound," said Archer.

And sure enough, when they reached the other room, there round an amply furnished board, with Burgundy beyond account, champagne punch creaming in a vast bowl, hock almost frozen in its silver coolers, the Globe's unrivalled Sercial and every drinkable that can be named or dreamed of—there stood, with bumpers ready filled, waiting their cue from Forester,—there stood—*the boys!*

The Tall Spirit, towering above the rest, with his blue eye and handsome face beaming with devilry and good-natured malice—the bald benevolence of the Doctor's classic head—the thin lips of long Massachusetts wreathed into a pleasant smile—the fine and manly beard of Tom Hutch—the waggish, devil-may-care, rakish cut of my Lord George Gordon—and, at the head, flanked by Sully on one hand and Kendall on the other, Frank Forester in all his glory.

"The Lord have mercy on us!" cried Archer solemnly.

"Health and long life and happiness!"—cried Forester, draining a potent draught and flinging the empty glass over his head.

“Health and long life and happiness! Hurrah!” and amid the roar of voices and the clang of breaking beakers, due homage was performed to Heneage and his beauteous bride.

“One more toast!” shouted Forester.—“The match maker!”

“The match maker! Hurrah! may he make many such.”

“It takes you, hoss!” said the Spirit, slapping Harry on the back.

“Why yes, Bill”—answered Harry—“we can do *some things* at MY SHOOTING BOX.”





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1-year loans may be recharged by bringing the books to the Circulation Desk

Renewals and recharges may be made 4 days prior to due date

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<i>Oct 15 1985</i>		
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